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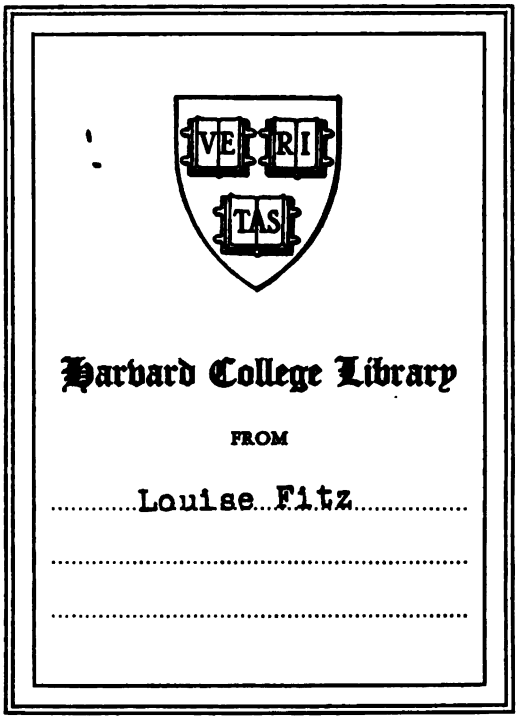


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Louise Fitz

# THE COMPLETE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN

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*LIBRARY EDITION*

# THE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN

EDITED BY

E. T. COOK

AND

ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1906

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VOLUME XXII

# LECTURES ON LANDSCAPE
# MICHAEL ANGELO & TINTORET
# THE EAGLE'S NEST
# ARIADNE FLORENTINA

WITH NOTES FOR OTHER OXFORD LECTURES

*A Country Girl*

# LECTURES ON LANDSCAPE
# MICHAEL ANGELO & TINTORET
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BY

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# INTRODUCTION TO VOL. XXII

THIS volume continues the series of Ruskin's Oxford Lectures from Volume XX., and covers the years 1871 and 1872, to which, however, *Fors Clavigera* will, in a later volume, take us back. The works here included are: I. Three *Lectures on Landscape*, delivered in January and February 1871. II. *The Relation between Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, and III. *The Eagle's Nest*; both of which were delivered in the earlier terms of 1872. IV. *Ariadne Florentina*, delivered in November and December of the same year. In the Appendix are given, as explained below (p. xli.), Notes for two later courses—"Studies in the *Discourses* of Sir Joshua Reynolds" (1875), and "Readings in *Modern Painters*" (1877). This arrangement, which is convenient for the better distribution of the material into volumes approximately of the same length, has the further advantage that the topics mainly treated in these later courses are closely connected with the doctrines enforced in *The Eagle's Nest*.

In the present Introduction account is first given of Ruskin's life and work during the years 1871 and 1872, so far as, on the one hand, they have not already been covered in the two preceding volumes, and with special reference, on the other hand, to the lectures here collected. Some particulars then follow of the several books contained in the volume.

## 1871, 1872

It will be noticed that in 1871 Ruskin delivered only three lectures at Oxford. He did, however, some work there in the early part of the year in arranging his Collection and organising the Drawing School;[1] but there were reasons for the barrenness of the year so far as the Professor's lectures were concerned. Partly, he allowed himself to be distracted by other work; and for the rest, the year was one of personal sorrow and serious illness.

With the beginning of January 1871 commenced the series of monthly letters which he called *Fors Clavigera*, and which led him, as we shall see in a later volume, into many schemes and activities. A year later he broke with his old publisher, and took into his own hands the publication and sale of his books. Early in 1871 he spent

[1] See Vol. XXI. pp. xix. *seq.*

some time, also, as a member of the Mansion House Committee which had been formed to send help to Paris, then besieged.

But the year 1871 was also one of domestic upheavals and the breaking of old ties. In April his cousin, Joan, was married to Mr. Arthur Severn, younger son of the "Keats' Severn," who was also a friend of Ruskin and his father.[1] Though the separation was only to be a short one, the departure of his cousin was a heavy loss to Ruskin. Shortly before, he had returned home one day to find his old nurse lying dead. Next to that of father and mother, he wrote afterwards, there was no loss which he felt so much as this of "Anne, my father's nurse and mine."[2] "She was one of our many," he adds—one of love's meinie in the household at Denmark Hill; and though she was somewhat of a tyrant, and even according to Ruskin's mother "possessed by the Devil," Ruskin felt for her something of the clinging affection which Stevenson has expressed so beautifully in the dedication of his *Child's Garland of Verse* to "My second mother, my first wife." The strength of Ruskin's mother was beginning to fail; and he had further anxiety in the illness of Mrs. Severn from rheumatic fever. As soon as she was able to join him, she did so with her husband. They found him at Matlock Bath, where he had gone for a summer holiday. It was a cold, wet July. Ruskin, up with the sun as ever, was painting a spray of wild rose for his Oxford School.[3] He caught a chill, and a severe attack of internal inflammation intervened. He was a difficult patient, but he had affectionate nursing from Mrs. Arthur Severn and her husband, and Lady Mount-Temple, and Dr. Acland was in professional attendance. To his friend and physician Ruskin, immediately on recovery, sent the following letter of thanks:—

"Denmark Hill, S.E.,
"*5th August*, '71.

"My dear Henry,—I was glad to have your letter, beginning myself to get anxious about *you*, knowing well how much among other things you had been tired by my illness. I am afraid the cheque enclosed will not cover the mere loss of your time, and your kindness I would not, you well know, think of valuing in ways like this.

"I am thankful you are resting at Holnicote. I cannot answer for my own movements at all until I am less anxious about my mother; but she is better since I came home.

"I knew very thoroughly how ill I was; I have not been so near the dark gates since I was a child. But I knew also, better than anybody else could, how strong the last fibres and coils of anchor

[1] See *Præterita*, ii. ch. ii.; and compare Vol. IV. p. 393.
[2] *Præterita*, i. § 31.
[3] No. 238 in the Rudimentary Series: see Vol. XXI. p. 230, and Plate XLVI.

were; and though I clearly recognized the danger, should have been much surprised to have found myself dying. I did not quite know how frightened all of you were, or I would have comforted you. I am now going to attend to my health as the principal thing, until I can lie down in Coniston Water.

"I am greatly delighted and relieved in mind by your brother's permission to keep his name as Trustee for the St. George's Fund.[1]

"All that you tell me about the room[2] is most pleasant. Quite right not to decorate.

"Love to Mrs. A.

"Ever your grateful

"J. RUSKIN."

Ruskin had in fact been perilously near to death. The anxiety which his friends had felt on his account appears in a subsequent letter from Carlyle:—

"5 CHEYNE WALK, CHELSEA,

"21 *October*, 1871.

"DEAR RUSKIN,—I cannot explain to myself the strange, and indeed lamentable, fact that I have not seen you, or heard a distinct word from you, for, I think, seven or eight months. It is a fact that has become not only surprising to me, but distressing, and the source latterly of continual anxieties both about myself and you. For three months I had no amanuensis (I in the Highlands; Mary in Dumfries-shire, far away), and without a hand could not write to you myself; about the middle of that period, too, there came the most alarming rumours of your illness at Matlock, and both Lady Ashburton and myself (especially the latter party, for whom I can answer best) were in a state really deserving pity on your account, till the very newspapers took compassion on us, and announced the immediate danger to be past. All this is wrong, and *not* as it should be. I beg earnestly that, wherever this may find you, you would at once devote one serious half-hour to me, and write a few words of authentic news concerning yourself, and especially a word of *prediction* as to when I may expect to see you again, if ever. The *Fors Clavigera* sufficiently assures me, from time to time, that it is not want of the old goodwill towards me which keeps you silent, but the *Fors Clavigera* itself (which very few can get hold of, though many are seeking it) awakens anxieties in me instead of satisfying them all. In short, a deliberate bit of letter is indispensable to me for all manner of reasons.

"It is four weeks to-day since I returned hither; said by sanguine friends to be visibly 'improved in health'; felt by myself to be only invisibly so, if at all. Now, as formerly, I have my daily (especially my *nightly*) battle to fight with the innumerable Beasts at Ephesus—human, diabolical, and also of the inanimate sort—which never quit a poor fellow till they have brought

[1] Sir Thomas Dyke Acland: see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 9.

[2] The Ruskin Drawing School: see Vol. XXI. p. xxix.

him to the ground altogether; against which I faintly, but really sometimes with an earnest wish, endeavour to make fight, though of course with weaker and weaker effect. Froude has returned, and is often asking about you; as indeed are many others, to whom the radiant qualities which the gods have given you, and set you to work with in such an *element*, are not unknown. Write me a word at once, dear Ruskin. Mary sends her love to you. The most mournful tragedy has happened in her and my circle—the death of her eldest Brother by the accident of leaping down from a coach here, probably with too much trust in his nimbleness of limb; an excellent, completely faithful, and valiant young man, whose loss has thrown a gloom over us all. No more to-day. *Do* swiftly what I have begged of you.

"I remain, ever and always,

"Heartily yours,

"T. CARLYLE."

Ruskin, like Carlyle, had his fight with wild beasts at Ephesus. We have heard him say of the year 1871 that in it he experienced his "most acute mental pain" and "most nearly mortal illness." The pain to which he referred was suffered in the region of the affections, for this year was a dark one in the chequered story of his romance. The illness at Matlock was accompanied by many dreams, some of which he recounts in *Ariadne Florentina* (§ 213).

Among the recollections of early years which crowded in upon Ruskin during his illness was one which "Fors" was presently to drive in with the hammer of fortunate occurrence. His mind had gone back to his boyhood's days when he had stayed—then as now—at Matlock, and had thence gone on to the Lake Country:—

"I weary for the fountain foaming,
For shady holm and hill;
My mind is on the mountain roaming,
My spirit's voice is still. . . .
I weary for the heights that look
Adown upon the dale.
The crags are lone on Coniston . . ."

So he had written as a boy,[1] and now it seemed to him that only by the shores of that deep-bosomed lake could he find peace and refreshment. At the very moment W. J. Linton, the poet and wood-engraver, was seeking a purchaser for his house at Coniston:—

"I found a home (writes Linton) at Brantwood, on the eastern side of Coniston Water, some nine or ten miles from Ambleside, a house under Furness Fells, in Monk Coniston, so called because the land had been part

[1] See Vol. II. p. 3; and compare the letter to Acland on p. xix. here.

of the domain of the Cistercian Monks of Furness Abbey (Church Coniston village was on the western side of the lake). The manorial right had fallen to the Buccleuchs at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries; and to the Duke of Buccleuch, my portion of the land being copyhold, I paid a yearly fine of one shilling and three halfpence, to have my title recorded in the manorial books, when after a year's tenancy I was enabled by the help of mortgage-money to buy the estate—a fairly large house and ten acres of copse-wood steeply rising up the fell." [1]

Linton had entered into occupation of Brantwood in 1852, and there he set up a printing-press for the production of his periodical, entitled *The English Republic*, an organ "to explain Republican Principles, to record Republican Progress, and to establish a Republican Party in England." A little later the estate was extended. "My sheep-feeding on the fell above entitled me," adds Linton, "when the common land between Coniston Water and Esthwaite Water was enclosed, to an apportionment of six acres, mostly covered with heather and juniper, so that I had sixteen acres instead of ten to sell." Ruskin no sooner heard of the opportunity than he seized it. Linton was now in America, and "the purchase of Brantwood was pleasantly arranged," he says, "in a couple of letters." [2] The price paid by Ruskin was £1500. As soon as he was sufficiently convalescent he went to inspect his new possession. It delighted him greatly. "I've had a lovely day," he wrote to Mrs. Arthur Severn (Coniston, September 12); "the view from the house is finer than I expected; the house itself dilapidated and rather dismal." And so, again, next day: "Anything so lovely as the view from my rocks to-day I haven't seen since I was at Lago Maggiore." On the next day, again, Ruskin was yet more delighted with his new possession:—

"*14th September, Evening.*

"Anything so splendid in the way of golden and blue birds as the pheasant I put up at my own wicket-gate to the moors out of my own heather, was never seen except in my own Joanie's own pheasant drawing that she's never asked after this age.[3] My wrist is stiff with rowing; I've rowed full six miles to-day, besides scrambling up the bed of a stream holding on by the heather, and, more than I cared for, juniper bushes, which is exercise also.

"There certainly *is* a special fate in my getting this house. The man from whom I buy it—Linton—wanted to found a 'republic,' printed a certain number of numbers of the *Republic* like my *Fors Clavigera!* and his printing-press is still in one of the outhouses, and

[1] *Memories*, by W. J. Linton, 1895, p. 97.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 132, 166.
[3] That is, a drawing which Ruskin was doing for Mrs. Severn.

'God and the People' scratched deep in the whitewash outside. Well, it won't be a 'republican centre' now, but whether the landed men round will like my Toryism better than his Republicanism, remains to be seen.

"The house is built on the rock itself, and in a recess of the hillside, which rises *too* steeply behind the house, almost as the hill did at the Giessbach behind Connie's room, that you got to by the bridge. A bridge twelve feet long would reach the hillside from my roof, and I'm sorry to say the spring which I am so proud of has been allowed to soak its way down exactly there, and under the house as far as chinks of rock will let it, with what result to *apricot jam* inside *you* may fancy! The first thing I've to do is to cut a trench in the rock to carry away this drainage; it is just like a dripping well at Matlock, behind the house.

"For the house itself! Well, there *is* a house, certainly, and it has rooms in it, but I believe in reality nearly as much will have to be done as if it were a shell of bricks and mortar. Meantime, the first thing I've to do is to build a wall up one side of my *six*, not five, acres of moor."

"*Friday.*—I've so much to do, and it's *so* beautiful, I can't go to Scotland. Write here always.

"I've been rowing and cutting wood (nuts some) in my own woods. I send you my first nuts in a box."

Having thus inspected the domain and given the necessary orders for its being put into repair, Ruskin went to Scotland to visit his friends the Hilliards, who were staying at Abbeythune. The journey invigorated him:—

"I've had such an exquisite drive from Keswick," he wrote from Carlisle (September 23), "over the high moorlands by the English Wigtown. The day was, most fortunately, the *clearest* I have seen this year—with the sweet *Northern* clearness I remember so well in old times—and when I got about half-way to Carlisle, to the bow of the moorland, there was all the Solway, Criffel, and the blue promontories as far as your own Wigtown on one side, and all the Liddesdale hills and the western Cheviots on the other, with the vast plain of Cumberland between. I think I never in England saw anything so *vast* and so beautiful—I saw, indeed, the Solway from Skiddaw, but that was late in the day, and from so great a height it is too much like a map—to-day it was all divided into bars of blue and gold by sunny gleams between flying clouds, rich and vast as the plain of Milan, but with a sweet wildness and simplicity of pastoral and solitary life expressed in it also; very wonderful. Then the air was as pure and bracing as air could be."

He spent two days at Melrose, and then, as he notes in his diary, "by Gala Water, Edinburgh, Stirling, Perth, Dundee to Arbroath by moonlight" (September 25). He stayed a week with his friends, enjoying the sea air, and then returned for a few days to Coniston, afterwards stopping on the way south at Lichfield.

Ruskin's little journey in the north had completed his convalescence, and he was intending to lecture at Oxford during the October term, but the increasing failure of his mother's health caused him daily anxiety, and he was compelled to relinquish the idea. The dangerous illness of her son had hastened her decline, and on December 5 the end came. Ruskin sent some account of the last days, and after, to his old friend W. H. Harrison and to Dr. Acland:—

"Denmark Hill, S.E.,
"*6th Dec.*, '71.

"My dear Harrison,—Your old friend passed away at a quarter after two yesterday afternoon. You have every cause of happy thought respecting her, believing her to be now where she would like best to be, and having nothing but love and kindness rendered to her in life, to look back upon, on your part.

"I have not by any means your certainty on the first head, and find myself more repentant than I ever expected to be, for the contrary of love and kindness, rendered to her.

"I fancied I knew pretty well how I should feel at the end, often putting it to myself. But I am much more surprised at the new look of things in the twilight than I was after the sun had set for my father.

"Ever your loving
"J. Ruskin.

"You would like to come to the funeral perhaps. I would *ask* no one; but come, if you would like."

"Denmark Hill, S.E.,
"*December 6th*, 1871.

"My dearest Henry,—You would like better to see my mother now than when you last sate beside her. She reminds me altogether of what she was when she taught me the Sermon on the Mount, and two or three things more, not useless to me: and her hand lies on her breast as prettily as if Mino of Fésole had cut it, and it is very pretty, though so thin.

"The last days were very cruel. I am glad no members of the Metaphysical saw them, of the Huxley side, lest they should be afraid to speak without hurting me. For, indeed, the sinking of all back to the bleak Mechanism was difficult to bear the sight of. Absolute unconsciousness at last, with aspect of restless pain.

"I have kept fairly well by the help of your good nurse, who was entirely invaluable to us, and of Joan, and the servants. They spared me all they could; Joan is a preciousest creature in any real need—*very* precious at all times.

"Ever your affectionate
"JOHN RUSKIN."

Ruskin's mother was ninety when she died. She was laid to rest beside her husband, whom she trusted to see again—"not to be near him," she had said, "not to be so high in heaven, but content if she might only *see* him."[1] In after years Ruskin added to the inscription on the monument which he had designed for his father,[2] this tribute to his mother's memory:—

"Here
Beside my father's body
I have laid
My mother's;
Nor was dearer earth
Ever returned to earth,
Nor purer life
Recorded in heaven."

This inscription was not the only monument which Ruskin desired to erect to his mother's memory, whose Christian name was Margaret, and whose early home had been at Croydon.[3] He tried to restore a spring of water between Croydon and Epsom, and he erected a tablet at the spot, bearing the following words: "In obedience to the Giver of Life, of the brooks and fruits that feed it, of the peace that ends it, may this Well be kept sacred for the service of men, flocks, and flowers, and be by kindness called MARGARET'S WELL. This pool was beautified and endowed by John Ruskin, Esq., M.A., LL.D." His project, however, failed, for the reason which he gives in one of his Oxford lectures.[4] The stream was again fouled; the inscription was taken down;[5] and though at the close of 1880 we find him again reverting to the subject in his diary and proposing a fresh inscription,[6] nothing now remains to record his attempt.

[1] W. G. Collingwood's *Life and Work of Ruskin*, 1900, p. 283.
[2] See Vol. XVII. p. lxxvii.
[3] See *Præterita*, i. ch. i. ("The Springs of Wandel").
[4] See below, p. 533; and compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 1 (Vol. XVIII. p. 385).
[5] The tablet was at one time re-erected by a purchaser in a neighbouring garden.
[6] "1880, *Nov.* 30.—I thought of my mother's memorial again: 'This Spring, in memory of a maid's life as pure, and a mother's love as ceaseless, dedicate to a spirit in peace, is called by Croydon people Margaret's Well. Matris animæ Joannes Ruskin: 1880.'"

The loving trust which the mother placed in the son, who thus honoured her memory, was shown by her will, made immediately before her death: "I leave all I have to my son."[1] An honour, which came to Ruskin at the end of the year, perhaps pleased his mother in her last days. He was elected Lord Rector of St. Andrews University by 36 votes against 79 given for Lord Lytton. It was presently discovered, however, that by the Scottish Universities Act of 1858 any one holding a professorship at a British University was disqualified for a Lord Rectorship. Lord Neaves was chosen instead, and the students missed a Rectorial Address from Ruskin.

Deeply though Ruskin felt his mother's death, he conceded nothing to idle sorrow. "To-day" was his life's motto, and so soon as his mother was laid to rest he threw himself into the tasks and duties of the world around him. It was during those weeks that he obtained permission from the Board of St. Giles's to employ at his own expense a regiment of the unemployed upon the better sweeping of the streets in Seven Dials; one of his diaries contains notes on the characters and histories of several members of the squad. At this time, too, Ruskin was again seeing much of Carlyle, who loudly applauded his manifold and practical activities.

The death of his mother decided Ruskin to give up the Denmark Hill house, and to transfer his things to Oxford or Brantwood. Mr. and Mrs. Severn had been established in the old house at Herne Hill, where Ruskin's nursery was always kept as a sanctum for him when staying in London. The departure from his old home was, however, a severe wrench to him. "Increasing despondency on me," he wrote in his diary (January 11, 1872), "as time for leaving draws near." "I write my morning date for the last time in my old study" (March 28). The next entry is at Oxford: "29 March, 1872. Good Friday. In my college rooms, having finally left my old home. I open at and read the 29th of Ezekiel, and, secondly, by equal chance, at the 16th Psalm." These *Sortes Biblicæ* may be taken as declaring the spirit of the work which he had now been set free to resume at Oxford. "Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog;" what was this but Ruskin's mission? "I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel;" is not this the spirit in which he discoursed upon the heavenly wisdom in *The Eagle's Nest*? He had at first proposed for his next lectures three more on Landscape and then three on Fishes. He had been working on the classification of fishes and their artistic "points" somewhat fully, as his note-books show, and the

[1] *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 76 (Notes and Correspondence).

course on fishes was to have been a particularly good one. "I'm very anxious," he wrote to Acland (December 22, 1871), "to have the Dean at them, if possible. The fish ones are not to have any jests, but to be real work all through." When it came to the point, however, the subject of fishes was put aside, and Ruskin opened his work at Oxford for the year 1872 with a longer series on the relations of Science and Art. Each of these lectures was delivered twice—first to the University and then again to a general audience.

After the double delivery of these ten lectures, with work still continuing on the arrangement of the Art Collection, Ruskin determined to seek relaxation in change of work in Italy, where also he might gather material for future lectures.[1] He was accompanied on this occasion by Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Severn, and Mrs. and Miss Hilliard, and also by Mr. Albert Goodwin, in whose then rising talent he took the liveliest interest, and to whom he rendered many offices of friendly counsel and assistance. They went first to Geneva, and he notes in his diary "Goodwin and Arthur hard at work on my well-known path, at the sunset over Bonneville." Next, they went, again on Ruskin's old road, by Genoa and Sestri into Italy, making some stay at Pisa and Lucca. At the former place Ruskin made several sketches for his Oxford schools, and observations which left their mark in a subsequent course of lectures (*Val d'Arno*). At Lucca he noted "Chapel of Rose destroyed, as of Thorn at Pisa" (May 1). Similarly, from Lucca he wrote to Mr. Macdonald (May 4): "Two of my favourite buildings in Italy have been destroyed within the last two years, and I am working day and night (or at least early morning) to save a few things I shall never see again." He rose sometimes, as entries in his diary show, before four in the morning; for in addition to his sketching, he was busy with correcting various books for the press, and in writing the "Instructions" for his Drawing School. His travels may in part be traced in *Fors Clavigera;* as, for instance, in Letter 18 ("Val di Nievole") written partly at Pisa, partly at Lucca, and partly at Rome. It was among the hills above Lucca that Miss Hilliard lost her jewelled cross, which the peasants found and returned without thought of reward. The incident figures both in *Fors* and in a lecture which Ruskin

[1] The itinerary was as follows: Paris (April 13), Geneva (April 14), Annecy (April 16), Turin (April 20), Genoa (April 23), Sesti (April 24), Pisa (April 27), Lucca (May 1), Florence (May 6), Rome (May 11), Assisi (May 21), Perugia (May 24), Siena (May 26), Orvieto (May 30), Florence (June 1), Bologna (June 14), Verona (June 15), Venice (June 22), Milan (July 13), Como (July 14), Baveno (July 15), Domo d'Ossola (July 19), Simplon (July 20), Sion (July 23), Geneva (July 24), Herne Hill (July 26).

delivered two years later on Jacopo della Quercia.[1] At Lucca, as at Pisa, he made many drawings which are now at Oxford. But, as ever with him, the more he did the more he grieved at what had to be left undone. "My life flying like a dream," he says in his diary (Lucca, May 3); and so a little later at Rome, "days flying like the dust in the wind." Yet at Rome, as at Florence, Perugia, and Assisi, he worked incessantly and constantly, noting new impressions, or connecting in new ways the results of his observation. A page or two of the notes in his diary may here be transcribed as a sample of his memoranda at this time:—

> "*Inlaying.*—Font of Baptistery at Pisa. Precision with studied irregularity, consummate. Colour only used, not gold.
>
> "Pulpit of St. Bernardino at Perugia—late, refined, but Byzantine gold method kept.
>
> "Florence, outside of Duomo and Baptistery—consummate in power and modesty.
>
> "Square of red and white superb in pure precision and scale. St. Chiaro of Assisi, north side (the buttressed one).
>
> "Duomo of Perugia. Outside, in superb panels: highly finished—leads on to the Hospital of Venice and Miracoli.
>
> "At last it becomes effeminate, and takes to imitation in Florentine tables. But what tables! in the Pitti Palace, of shells and flowers. This devotion of it to private luxury its ruin."

At Rome Ruskin's chief interest was in the work of Botticelli in the Sistine Chapel. "I am very glad," he wrote to Acland (Siena, May 27), "I said what I did in my lecture on M. Angelo.[2] The Sistine roof is one of the sorrowfullest pieces of affectation and abused power that have ever misled the world. Its state is better than I expected, its colour good. But it is, in pure fact, a series of devices for exhibition of legs and arms, with a great deal of fine feeling used to disguise the intent." The earlier masters proportionately delighted him:—

> "(Rome), *May* 17.—Yesterday early out to St. Peter's; found glorious Moses by Perugino, and little dog of Sandro Botticelli."
>
> "(Perugia.)—Perugino's frescoes in Sala del Cambio. Refinement possible with merchandise and money. Grass all done with black dots on green, all gradated with the touch. Black outlines as firm and calm as finest penmanship. Colours *absolutely* clay-like and valueless in themselves—glorious in gradation and opposition. Softness

[1] See Vol. XXIII. The scenery and peasant-life of the hills between Lucca and Pisa remained much in Ruskin's mind: see, in a later volume, *Roadside Songs of Tuscany* ("Notes on the Life of Santa Zita").

[2] In the lecture given in June 1871; see below, pp. 77 *seq.*

> often obtained in hair, etc., by fast sweeps of colour fading away; so also by M. Angelo. Every quality—firmness, breadth, precision, tenderness, softness—in its right place.
>
> "I am wofully forgetting the lovely Sandro of the Vatican. Moses at the Burning Bush twice over—pulling his shoes and stockings off, in middle of picture; action repeated by Perugino in the Baptism. Below, he is leading his family away from Jethro's house, his staff in his hand; the infinitely wonderful little dog is carried, with the bundle, by the eldest boy; its sharp nose and living paws marvellously foreshortened.
>
> "The grandest Perugino I saw, in oil, is the Assumption in the Annunziata[1] at Florence; Andrea del Sarto's tailor fresco taking the eyes from this, as M. Angelo in the Sistine: the essentially vulgar qualities always set to conquer the gracious ones. But the local colour in the shadow of the Virgin's robe against the sky in this picture is the most perfect unison of colour and chiaroscuro, all right, that I saw in Italy. John Bellini's colour is grand, but hard and wooden in comparison; Titian's, sublimely joyless. Here is enjoyment of the most exquisitely delicate and pure kind—like a child's enjoyment of fruit—with perfect dignity. The law that every local colour is to be kept separate and shaded with itself, universal in great work. Benozzo Gozzoli in Campo Santo, and Riccardi Chapel, a model for all early students."

Many of these notes left their mark in the ensuing course of lectures (*Ariadne Florentina*). To Perugino he awards "the captain's place" (§§ 72, 262); Gershom's little dog was shown (§ 257); and Botticelli was one of the main subjects of the course. Other impressions of the same tour recur in *Val d'Arno* (1873). From Rome and Tuscany Ruskin and his friends went to Verona, where he wrote a monograph on the Cavalli Monuments for the Arundel Society (Vol. XXIV.), and to Venice, where he made further study of Carpaccio.

On his return to England Ruskin had a brief period of exceptional happiness—soon, however, to be yet more darkly clouded over. A few entries in his diary tell of his peace of mind:—

> "13*th August*, 1872, *Tuesday*, BROADLANDS.—Entirely calm and clear morning. The mist from the river at rest among the trees, with rosy light on its folds of blue, and I, for the first time these ten years, happy. Took up Renan's *St. Paul* as I was dressing, and read a little; a piece of epistle in smaller type caught my eye as I was closing the book: *Grâce à Dieu pour son ineffable don.*"[2]

[1] In the seventh chapel. The Andrea del Sarto is his famous fresco, the "Madonna del Saco"; "tailor fresco," a play on "Sarto," tailor-made.

[2] 2 Corinthians ix. 15.

"17*th August*, Herne Hill.—Oh me, that ever such thought and rest should be granted me once more."

"18*th August*, *Sunday*.—In the morning, in church at Toft, beside R. Now at the corner of a room in the Euston Square hotel, altogether miserable. Going to bed, I take up the inn table New Testament. It opens at 'A little while, and ye shall not see Me; and again a little while, and ye shall see Me, because I go to the Father.'[1]

The clouds, however, soon descended, and Ruskin sought relief, as was ever his way, in hard work. On September 18 he took possession of Brantwood, which was now ready for his occupation, and he had his Oxford lectures to prepare. These (*Ariadne Florentina*) were duly delivered in November and December, and he presently returned to Brantwood:—

"Brantwood, *Sunday, 28th December*.—Last night the first here; slept sound, and dreamed of teaching some one how to paint angels, and then showing them how angels should be represented as flying to music."

"1872, *last day of*, Brantwood, *Tuesday*.—Intensely dark and rainy morning. But I, on the whole, victorious, and ready for new work, and my possessions pleasant to me in my chosen, or appointed, home, and my hand finding its deed."

His hand, as we shall see, was to find much to do, which he did with all his might, in the years that were now to come.

## "LECTURES ON LANDSCAPE"

The lectures on Landscape (1871), which stand first in this volume, break no ground that will be new to readers of Ruskin's earlier works; they were essentially lectures to his own class, and the point of them lay much in the illustrations. In a letter to Acland, Ruskin explained their scope:—

"I cannot let the bonnets in, on any conditions, this term. The three public lectures will be chiefly on angles, degrees of colour, prisms (without any prunes), and other such things of no use to the female mind, and they would occupy the seats in mere disappointed puzzlement. They shall all come, if they like, when I get on the religious schools again.

[1] John xvi. 16.

> "There's a small Sandro Botticelli in the Old Masters worth giving up a day full of patients to see.[1] It makes heaven look so nice that if any patients are dead when you get back—you'll feel they ought to be the more obliged to you."

The principal proposition which the lectures were meant to enforce—namely, the dependence of the power of landscape-art upon human sympathy—is to be found also laid down in *Modern Painters*,[2] and it was again the theme of one of Ruskin's final lectures at Oxford.

He did not at the time publish this course. "When first I undertook the duties of this professorship," he explained in 1883, "my own personal liking for landscape made me extremely guarded in recommending its study. I only gave three lectures on landscape in six years, and I never published them."[3] Another reason was the difficulty of illustrating the lectures. Later improvements, however, in methods of reproduction overcame this obstacle, and in 1897 the lectures were issued to the public with numerous and attractive plates.

The *text* of the lectures, as here given, follows a fair copy made in 1871 by Ruskin's servant, Crawley, and revised by the author in that year; it shows a few minor differences from that printed by the editor of the 1897 edition (see the Bibliographical Note, pp. 6–7). The first draft of much of the lectures, in Ruskin's hand, is in one of the ledgers already described (Vol. XX. p. xlix.); from this source some additional passages are here given beneath the text (see, *e.g.*, pp. 20, 22, 29). It was also used in the 1897 edition to supply §§ 26, 27, which are missing from Crawley's copy. A few further passages are now supplied from loose MS. sheets among Ruskin's papers at Brantwood (p. 11 *n.*), or from the reports of the lectures published at the time of delivery (p. 15 *n.*). A *facsimile* of a page of the first draft is given (pp. 12, 13).

## "MICHAEL ANGELO AND TINTORET"

The lecture which follows those on Landscape in this volume was delivered with a special purpose, and excited more attention, compelling also more opposition, than any other of Ruskin's discourses from the Professorial chair. The University Galleries contain a

[1] The "Nativity," with the flying angels, now in the National Gallery: see below, *Lectures on Landscape*, § 58, p. 46.

[2] Chapter i. of pt. ix. §§ 8, 9 ("The Dark Mirror"): see Vol. VII. pp. 258–259. Compare also Vol. XIV. p. 128. The lecture of 1883 on Landscape is given in a later volume.

[3] *The Art of England*, § 156.

particularly fine collection of drawings by Michael Angelo. Ruskin's early admiration for that master had been much modified by later studies and enthusiasms, and he felt that it was part of his duty as Professor of Fine Art in Oxford to deliver his opinion upon some of the most famous of the University's art-treasures. He decided, accordingly, to deliver a public lecture on Michael Angelo, and in it he embodied some of the notes upon Tintoret which, as we have seen, he had at one time intended to expand into a whole course on that painter.[1] The lecture was delivered in the theatre of the Museum, and admission was by ticket. "I cannot adjourn to the Sheldonian theatre to-morrow," he wrote to Acland (June 12, 1871), "under any pressure, as I must show things and be understood, if I can anyhow contrive it." The lecture was illustrated, as the reader will see from the text, by constant reference to drawings in the University Galleries. The lecture was published, as a separate pamphlet, early in the next year, and the Professor's heresies about Michael Angelo excited loud and indignant protest. His fellow-professor at University College, London (Sir Edward Poynter), at once made a spirited reply, alike in defence of Michael Angelo and in condemnation of Ruskin;[2] and when Ruskin was succeeded in the Chair at Oxford by Sir William Blake Richmond, the first lectures of the new Professor were devoted to an elaborate appreciation of Michael Angelo's work in the Sistine Chapel. Ruskin's dear friend, Edward Burne-Jones, was also sadly perturbed by this lecture on Michael Angelo and Tintoret:—

"Ten years after the evening at Denmark Hill when the thing happened, Edward said of Ruskin's lecture: 'He read it to me just after he had written it, and as I went home I wanted to drown myself in the Surrey Canal or get drunk in a tavern—it didn't seem worth while to strive any more if he could think it and write it too.' In 1871 Edward writes again about Ruskin to Mr. Norton: 'You know more of him than I do, for literally I never see him nor hear from him, and when we meet we clip as of old and look as of old; but he quarrels with my pictures and I with his writing, and there is no peace between us—and you know it's all up when friends don't admire each other's work.' The old word 'clip' exactly describes the greeting that usually passed between him and Ruskin in their own houses; it was an impulsive movement forward by Edward, to whom his friend's visible presence was always a joy, and a curious half-embracing action of Ruskin's in return, which clasped his arm up to the elbow and drew them quite closely together. Later still another

[1] Vol. XX. p. li.

[2] See the reference given in the Bibliographical Note (below, p. 75).

letter to Mr. Norton says: 'Ruskin is back—came one day last week—and I forgave him all his blasphemies against my Gods—he looked so good through and through. But I want you to keep the peace between us, for after a month I shall begin to quarrel again.'"[1]

In reading Ruskin's lecture attention should, however, be paid to the limiting condition on which he himself insisted. The reader is to "observe that its business is only to point out what is to be blamed in Michael Angelo, and that it assumes the facts of his power to be generally known."[2] Ruskin referred his readers for the other side to Mr. Tyrwhitt's *Christian Art;* and in a preface contributed by him to that book[3] he again commends Mr. Tyrwhitt's lectures as showing "the most beautiful and just reverence for Michael Angelo," whereas his own lecture "is entirely devoted to examining the modes in which his genius itself failed, and perverted that of other men. But Michael Angelo," he adds, "is great enough to make praise and blame alike necessary, and alike inadequate, in any true record of him." Ruskin might have referred not only to Mr. Tyrwhitt, for the necessary supplement to his criticisms of Michael Angelo, but to the passages in his own early chapter on "Imagination Penetrative," which contain so noble a rhapsody upon Michael Angelo's master-works.[4] Ruskin in his preface to Mr. Tyrwhitt's book speaks of himself further as a "miner" discerning the master's faults; and perhaps something should be allowed, in reading the lecture, to the miner's temptation of exaggerating the significance of his finds, as also to the lecturer's love of startling paradox. Sir William Richmond has a charmingly characteristic reminiscence of Ruskin in this connexion. Among other statements in the lecture, as Sir William recollected it—but not as Ruskin wrote it—was the assertion that "one lock of hair painted by Tintoretto is worth the whole of the roof of the Sistine Chapel put together." Twelve years later Sir William Richmond resigned the Oxford professorship that Ruskin might be re-elected:—

"I think that this touched him, and he wrote me the sweetest possible letter asking if he might come and dine with me, to which request, of course, I acceded with alacrity, delighted once again to shake him by the hand who had initiated me into so much that, without him, I should never have known of. Disagreement should never sever friendship. Nothing could have been more delightful than the evening we passed together,

[1] *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, vol. ii. pp. 18, 19.
[2] Prefatory Note (below, p. 76).
[3] See below, pp. 109, 110.
[4] See Vol. IV. pp. 280–283.

recalling old times and talking only about the subjects concerning which we were in entire agreement, an evening that I shall ever remember to the last; and it was the last time that I saw him. He rose to leave me; turning round, he said, 'Willy, why did you make that violent attack upon me about Michael Angelo?' My answer was, 'Mr. Ruskin, because you wrote nonsense.' 'What did I say?' was the retort. I quoted the sentence that you have lately heard; at which, with ample generosity, he took both of my hands and said, 'My dear Willy, you are quite right; it was nonsense.' This is a noble instance of his real character."[1]

In fact, however, Ruskin had not said the "nonsense" attributed to him. He set "the waves of hair in a single figure of Tintoret's" against, not "the whole of the roof of the Sistine Chapel," but, "all the folds of unseemly linen" there[2]—which is by no means the same thing. Nobility of character Ruskin had; but it cannot honestly be claimed that he was so repentant of his heresies as Sir William Richmond seems to suggest. His further studies in the Sistine Chapel in the summer of the year following the lecture only confirmed him in the view therein expressed, and in the subsequent lecture on Botticelli, (*Ariadne Florentina*) he returned to the attack on Michael Angelo with renewed vigour, and, as we shall find,[3] with great gusto. The real fact has been well expressed by a judicious critic:[4] "We do not ask of S. Francis an impartial judgment of Cæsar, for he was no imperialist. . . . So we must not ask of Ruskin to praise Michael Angelo. He did praise him, and then he turned and smote him. . . . The first movement was one of intellectual consent to admiration of a great figure; the second was the profound revolt of a spirit whose real friends were the meek and humble, against a proud and angry art." Yet Ruskin's intellectual admiration of Michael Angelo was both sincere and enduring, as may be seen in this volume from references to his mighty imagination made in a lecture of 1875 (below, p. 500). In 1872, however, Ruskin was unrepentant, for in the course of the lectures on engraving (*Ariadne Florentina*), he returned to the charge,

[1] "Ruskin as I knew Him," in *St. George*, vol. v. pp. 300, 301.

[2] See § 27 (below, p. 101).

[3] See the letters to Acland (above, p. xxvii.) and Mrs. Severn (below, p. xxxiv.).

[4] "Ruskin and his Critics," by D. S. M., in the *Saturday Review*, October 20, 1900. We may compare a remark by Ruskin himself: "Of course the first persons to be consulted on the merit of a picture are those for whom the artist painted it; with those in after generations who have sympathy with them; one does not ask a Roundhead or a Republican his opinion on the Vandyck at Wilton, nor a Presbyterian minister his impressions of the Sistine Chapel" (Preface to E. T. Cook's *Popular Handbook to the National Gallery*).

enjoying himself therein not a little, as appears from a letter to Mrs. Severn :[1]—

"CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
"[*Dec.* 7, 1872].

"I'm so glad you're at Mr. Richmond's,[2] and can love and comfort him a little as you do me.

"How *I* should have discomforted him to-day. I've been going in at M. Angelo with all I know—and was in good trim, and the Prince was there, and a nice University audience, and the lecture went on hotly for an hour and a quarter—and I'm sure M. Angelo's none the better for it, though I daresay Mr. Richmond will say he's none the worse. (I should say so too, for I don't think he *can* be worse.) But really it *was* interesting, on the early divinity and theology of Botticelli, and I had good illustrations, and everybody seems pleased. I showed the Prince in and out, and he sent afterwards to ask if he might come and see some of the illustrations more quietly."

The *text* of the lecture on *The Relation between Michael Angelo and Tintoret* was never altered by Ruskin. The *manuscript* of the first draft of much of it occurs in one of his diaries, and a page is here reproduced (pp. 84, 85); and an additional passage is introduced from the same source (p. 83 *n.*). There is also at Brantwood a small note-book containing, in Mrs. Arthur Severn's hand, from Ruskin's dictation, a detailed description of Tintoret's "Paradise"—written as they sat opposite the picture in the Ducal Palace, day after day; he with opera-glass in hand, rapturous at each revelation of the painter's meaning. From this note-book an additional passage is given (p. 107 *n.*). No other MS. of the lecture is known to the editors.

## "THE EAGLE'S NEST"

The title of the lectures which next follow needs perhaps some explanation. The subject is the relation of Natural Science to Art; and "I am not fantastic in these titles," says Ruskin, "but try shortly to mark my chief purpose in the book by them."[3] What, then, is the purpose here marked by calling the lectures "The Eagle's Nest"? The answer is to be found in the lines which Ruskin quotes in the second lecture from Blake's *Book of Thel*:—

"Doth the Eagle know what is in the pit,
Or wilt thou go ask the Mole?"

[1] See also a note of 1881 in Vol. XI. p. 187.

[2] George Richmond, who in Ruskin's early days at Rome had been shocked by some of his artistic heresies (see *Præterita*, ii. §§ 36 *seq.*).

[3] *Ariadne Florentina*, § 27 (below, p. 315).

"The glory of the higher creatures is in ignorance of what is known to the lower." The higher the creature, the nobler are its conceptions in range and dignity. This is the central idea of the book, and this the main purpose expressed in the title; but Ruskin, as was his wont, plays around his chosen title, and finds, or makes, as he proceeds, many sub-meanings in it. Thus, in denouncing the prurience of mean curiosity, he asks whether science is to be *eagle-eyed* only in the sense that "wheresoever the *carcase* is, thither shall the eagles be gathered together"? (§ 86). He exhorts his hearers to the unselfish wisdom, of which the reward is "that our youth is renewed like the eagle's" (§ 64). So, again, in a beautiful and often quoted passage, he describes the recompense of modest and contented knowledge under the figure of "*nests* of pleasant thoughts . . . houses built without hands for our souls to live in" (§ 205). And so, again, he traces yet another secondary meaning for his title in the etymology of "debonnaire" —"out of a good eagle's nest,"[1] of gentle race, that is; and so, once more, "to preserve your eagles' nests is to be a great nation," for "it means keeping everything that is noble; mountains, and floods, and forests, and the glory and honour of them, and all the birds that haunt them."[2]

Though the title of the book may thus require some explanation from other passages in Ruskin's works, the lectures themselves are more clearly arranged and less discursive than some of his other courses. They were written, he tells us, "not with less care, but with less pains, than any in former courses" (Preface); but he was at any rate at pains to make the order of the argument clear. The reader may find it helpful to turn at the outset to the summary of Lectures i.–v. which Ruskin gives in § 96 and again in § 172. Their theme is general, "defining the manner in which the mental tempers, ascertained by philosophy to be evil or good, retard and advance the parallel studies of science and art." Then he passes in the next three lectures to "the literal modes in which the virtues of art are connected with the principles of exact science"—dealing in Lecture vi. (which is summarised in § 122) with the proposition that "sight is a distinctly spiritual power"; in Lecture vii. (summed in § 148) laying down that art is concerned with the aspects, not the materials, of inorganic nature; and in Lecture viii. (summed in § 149) making the same point in the case of organic things. But though art has no concern with invisible structure, it has much with invisible things (§ 173); and so Ruskin

[1] *Ariadne Florentina*, § 27 (below, p. 315). And so in *Val d'Arno*, § 200, he speaks of "debonnaireté, high breeding, 'out of good-nestedness.'"

[2] *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 75.

passes at the end of the book to illustrate how art may be ennobled by the study of mythology (Lecture ix.), and of the national history which lies embedded in heraldry[1] (Lecture x.).

Many of the maxims, principles, and illustrations which occur in *The Eagle's Nest* lie very near the centre of Ruskin's teaching. The spiritual essence of Sight is one of such principles; the reader will find it often recurring in some later Oxford lectures, of which notes are given in the Appendix to this volume (see pp. 510, 512). Again, "You will never love art well, till you love what she mirrors better"; this, he says, was one of the maxims which he was most eager for his hearers to accept (§ 41). Another maxim, that "anatomy will not help us to draw the true appearances of things" (§ 159), is characteristic of Ruskin's art-teaching; its enunciation was "instantly necessary," he says, "in explanation of the system adopted for the direction of my Oxford schools" (Preface); and it forms a connecting link between *The Relation between Michael Angelo and Tintoret* and *The Eagle's Nest*. The general ideas of the book belong also to Ruskin's central and ultimate beliefs. It has been said of him, with some truth, that he was "intellectually an agnostic, and spiritually a mystic."[2] In this book, as in many other places, he faces the intellectual alternative: the belief of men in the existence of a living power greater than their own may, he admits, be the result of imagination, rather than of perception.[3] But he bridges the chasm by an appeal to experience: "every formative art hitherto, and the best states of human happiness and order have depended on the apprehension of the mystery [of the Forming Power], which is certain, and of its personality, which is probable."[4] And so in these lectures on Art and Science the attitude of the spirit, or the form of thought "which makes common-sense unselfish, knowledge unselfish, art unselfish, and wit and imagination unselfish" (§ 29), is throughout regarded as an emanation from the Divine Wisdom.[5]

The *text* of *The Eagle's Nest* was never altered, and there is, therefore, nothing to be said under this head. Of the *manuscript*, a few loose sheets are at Brantwood, and one of these is here reproduced (pp. 180, 181). Some additional matter is given in footnotes. Thus,

[1] Compare § 114, p. 203.

[2] "The Sophia of Ruskin. What was it? and how was it reached?" by A. S. Mories, in *St. George*, vol. iv. p. 158.

[3] See § 29 (below, p. 143).

[4] *Queen of the Air*, § 89 (Vol. XIX. p. 378).

[5] Mrs. Meynell (*John Ruskin*, 1900, p. 214), and again Mr. Frederic Harrison (*John Ruskin*, 1902, p. 127), state that *The Eagle's Nest* was "a book which Carlyle liked best." The authority for the statement is not given in either case. Carlyle's letters seem rather to suggest that *Val d'Arno* was his favourite (see Vol. XXIII.).

a passage, intended for a continuation of one of the Oxford Catalogues, illustrates the Preface (see p. 121 *n.*); and a passage introductory of the lecture on the Halcyon is also printed (p. 239 *n.*): this was written when the lecture was first delivered in January 1872 "to the cannon-making workmen" at Woolwich.[1]

## "ARIADNE FLORENTINA"

The "Lectures on Wood and Metal Engraving," which come next in this volume, were delivered in 1872, the title then announced for the course being "Sandro Botticelli and the Florentine Schools of Engraving." They were published in separate parts at irregular intervals between 1873 and 1876 (see Bibliographical Note, p. 293); the later lectures were rewritten at Assisi in 1874, after Ruskin's further study in that year of Botticelli's work at Rome.[2] The fragmentary nature of some of the book is sufficiently confessed by the author at the beginning of *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 60: "The Appendix," he says, "is a mass of loose notes which need a very sewing machine to bring together—and any one of these that I take in hand leads me into ashamed censorship of the imperfection of all I have been able to say about engraving." The fact is that on this subject, as on nearly every other which Ruskin touched, his sayings are scattered. With the present work on the art of engraving in general, the reader should connect the earlier papers entitled *The Cestus of Aglaia* (Vol. XIX.); on the art of etching he should refer to the paper on "Mr. Ernest George's Etchings" (Vol. XIV.); while for some remarks on mezzotint he should consult Vol. XIV. p. 492. "*Ariadne Florentina* is in small part a scientific treatise, but there is no other book comparable to it," says Professor Norton, "in opening the more recondite sources of interest and enjoyment in the study of the art of engraving, and of its relations to the other arts."[3]

The first title given to the course indicates what was perhaps the original impulse in the lecturer's mind. He had come back from Rome and Florence after his tour of 1872 full, as we have seen, of Botticelli,[4] and this course took the work of that artist, together with Holbein's, as

[1] See in a later volume the letter to Professor Norton of December 23, 1871.

[2] See a letter to Professor Norton of June 21, 1874 (in a later volume).

[3] Introduction to the American ("Brantwood") edition of *Ariadne Florentina*, p. vii.

[4] Later volumes contain further studies of him; for references in earlier volumes, see Vol. IV. pp. 317, 355–356; Vol. V. p. 87; Vol. VIII. pp. 55, 149; Vol. XV. p. 345. Pater's essay on Botticelli had, as already remarked (Vol. IV. p. 355 *n.*), preceded Ruskin in calling special attention to that painter. Mr. Collingwood states (*Life*, p. 298) that in the *Ariadne* lectures, as delivered, Ruskin "quoted with appreciation the passage on the Venus Anadyomene from Mr. Pater's *Studies in the Renaissance* just published." This does not appear in the lectures as published.

the standards of engraving. And here an important explanation must be made. Ruskin, as has been already stated, in a note upon *Aratra Pentelici*, followed Vasari in attributing to Botticelli a share in all the engraved plates commonly ascribed to Baldini. Later research, however, has rejected this theory altogether. Even the existence of Baldini is held to be uncertain; Botticelli's share in any of the plates ascribed to Baldini is not generally accepted; and the plates, formerly ascribed to him collectively, are now commonly assorted into different schools and manners. The plates of which in this book Ruskin speaks as Botticelli's belong to four different series:—

(1) The set of "Tarocchi cards" already described,[1] which are now sometimes assigned to the school of Ferrara.[2]

(2) A set of plates representing the Planets, and their supposed influences on human character and destinies; these are of the Florentine school, dated earlier than 1465.[3]

(3) A set of plates representing the Sibyls (who from very early in the Christian era were imagined to have been half-inspired prophetesses of the new dispensation dwelling in the midst of Paganism);[4] these engravings are also of the Florentine school, dated about 1460–1480.

(4) Commonly associated with the Sibyls were the Prophets, of whom also there is a set of early Florentine engravings.

To the first of these sets, belong Plates XXVII., XXVIII. here; to the second, Plates XXVI. and XXIX.; to the third, Plates XXXI., XXXIII., and XXXIV.; and to the fourth, Plate XXX. An acquisition which Ruskin made at the time when he was preparing the lectures for publication confirmed him in the belief of Botticelli's authorship. He had already in his possession impressions of the plates above described, acquired partly at the suggestion of Burne-Jones. The same friend now brought to his notice a book of drawings which was in the market, and in which, again, Ruskin thought to detect Botticelli's hand. He wrote to Burne-Jones about the book at once:—

"*25th* and *26th Feb.* [1873],
"BRANTWOOD, CONISTON.

"So many thanks for your letter.

"If the British Museum won't buy that book, I will, on your farther report and recommendation, buy it myself, but I don't want to do it unless absolutely *necessary*—I mean, if the Museum can be got to buy it.

[1] Vol. XX. p. 335.
[2] See Mr. Sidney Colvin's Introduction to the *Florentine Picture Chronicle*, p. 34 *n*.
[3] A calendar of that year accompanies a set of them in the British Museum. Botticelli was born in 1447, or, according to some, in 1444.
[4] See *Ariadne Florentina*, § 211 (below, pp. 443–444).

"How many drawings are there—Paduan, *i.e.*, Mantegna? or what like?

"I never thought you and I should ever differ about *figure* drawing, till that great schism about the Orvieto man[1]—I forget his name (it's cold to-day, and my brain frozen). (Pollajuolo also I can't stand.)

"But I will trust to your dealing in this matter. The Baldinis I got (on your judgment partly) are among the most precious things I have, and these Sibyls make my mouth water. . . .

"What, think you, came to me yesterday—Ash Wednesday?

"Yesterday, at mid-day, came to me from Florence two of the corner-stone uprights of the Font that Dante broke,[2] and an angel between St. Mark and Luke from the middle of it. The two uprights are each two angels kneeling and blowing of trumpets. He could have broken a trumpet or wing merely by leaning against them."[3]

The book which Ruskin thereupon bought is *The Florentine Picture Chronicle*, already mentioned (Vol. XV. p. 380 *n.*). He refers to one of the drawings in § 187 of *Ariadne Florentina*; they are now ascribed in the British Museum to Maso del Finiguerra, to whom Ruskin makes a reference in these lectures.[4]

When the earlier parts of *Ariadne Florentina* appeared his friends at the British Museum pointed out to Ruskin that there were some impressions of his favourite plates which contained the light and shade which he supposed to be absent from them (§ 246, p. 477), and also that his ascription of them all to Botticelli was, at best, exceedingly doubtful. In the last part, therefore, he speaks more tentatively on the subject (see § 210, p. 443). Ruskin, it should be said, laid no claim to what the French call *expertise*. "My readers," he says, "may trust me to tell them what is well done or ill; but by whom, is quite a separate question . . . not at all bearing on my objects in teaching."[5] And so, here, he says in the Appendix, "whatever is said in the previous pages of the plates chosen for example, by whomsoever done, is absolutely trustworthy" (p. 477). For "Botticelli" in the text, where engravings are spoken of, the reader should read more cautiously "Early Italian School."

The title "Ariadne Florentina" is, as befits its labyrinthine allusion, one of the least obvious in meaning among Ruskin's book-names. It was itself an afterthought, not appearing, as we have seen, in the

[1] Signorelli. For incidental references to him, see below, pp. 435, 441.

[2] See *Ariadne Florentina*, § 67 (below, p. 343). The fragments remain at Brantwood.

[3] Reprinted from *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, vol. ii. pp. 21, 22.

[4] See below, p. 338.

[5] *Mornings in Florence*, § 140 (Vol. XXIII.).

notice of the lectures, which also, when first announced for publication, were given a different title—"Facinora Dierum" (suggested perhaps by the *Works and Days*, Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι, of Hesiod—one of Ruskin's favourite poets). The first meaning of the title ultimately adopted is explained in the text, where he speaks of "the orders of decorative design, which are especially expressible by engraving," and which belong to "the instincts for the arrangement of pure line in labyrinthine intricacy, through which the grace of order may give continual clue." When, therefore, the author first thought of the title, he "hoped to have justified it by careful analysis of the methods by labyrinthine ornament, made sacred by Theseian traditions"—the traditions celebrated by Callimachus, among other authors, in his reference to "the intricacies of the winding labyrinth." This part of the subject Ruskin only glances at incidentally;[1] and his title must therefore be taken more generally as meaning the grace of the early school of Florence, which gives a clue, like Ariadne's, to lead the searcher after truth through the complicated study of engraving. But moral precepts were always present in Ruskin's mind beside artistic analysis. In his own copy of *Ariadne*, he noted § 27 on the flyleaf as the "cream of the book." The section so noted is that in which he enforces his favourite doctrines that the "didactic and intellectual" qualities distinguish the higher from the lower art; that like is known only of like, and the appreciation of noble art requires some answering quality in the observer; and, further, that the art-power of any individual is in large measure inherited from his race.[2] With these thoughts in his mind, and with his intense sympathy for the work and teaching of Botticelli, Ruskin's treatise became in large part a discourse on lines of conduct, no less than on lines engraved upon wood or steel, and "Ariadne Florentina" meant to him, further, the clue which the grace and order and faith of the Florentine masters may be made to afford through the perplexities and pitfalls of the labyrinth of life.

The *text* of *Ariadne* calls for no remark; the book was never revised by Ruskin. The trouble which he took in preparing it for the press is noted by himself (§ 44 *n.*). The *manuscript* of the book is unknown to the editors; but Mr. Wedderburn possesses (given to him by Ruskin) the first proof of Lecture vi.: this shows the author's usual care in revision.

[1] See § 221 (p. 451); and compare what he says elsewhere of the quality of ποικιλία in art, and of Dædalus, the mythical builder of the Cretan labyrinth (Vol. XX. pp. 349, 352). See also *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 23.

[2] This is the point of Ruskin's dwelling in § 27 on the meaning of "de-bonne-aire" as "out of a good eagle's nest" (compare p. xxxv., above).

## READINGS IN REYNOLDS AND "MODERN PAINTERS"

The lectures and notes for lectures, given in the Appendix, carry us forward somewhat beyond the chronological order. The lectures were delivered in 1875 and 1877, some of earlier date being, for convenience of topical arrangement, reserved for later volumes.[1] The two courses here included were, as will be seen, largely extempore, and to them applies the general account of such discourses given in an earlier Introduction (Vol. XX. pp. xxiii. *seq.*).

The "Studies in the *Discourses* of Sir Joshua Reynolds" (Appendix I.) contain much that is felicitous and just in regard to their professed subject; but the *Discourses* formed in fact little more than a starting-point for the lecturer's excursions in many and various directions. The lectures were less formal and less prepared than any others of his Oxford series, and the free and easy manner which he adopted in them occasionally verged on the grotesque. "In the decorous atmosphere of a University lecture-room," writes the Dean of Durham, "the strangest things befell; for example, in a splendid passage on the Psalms of David he was reminded of an anthem by Mendelssohn, lately rendered in one of the College chapels, in which the solemn dignity of the Psalms was lowered by the frivolous prettiness of the music. It was, 'Oh! for the wings' etc., that he had heard with disgust, and he suddenly began to dance and recite, with the strangest flappings of his M.A. gown, and the oddest look on his excited face. The Oxford musicians were furious, though indeed his criticism was just enough."[2]

The notes are here printed from the author's MSS. at Brantwood.

The "Readings in *Modern Painters*" (Appendix II.) were among the most successful which Ruskin delivered in Oxford. He attached great importance to them himself, and his audience heard him gladly. They were in part autobiographical; the readings from his own *magnum opus* were magnificently rendered; the lectures were the occasion of his description of the St. Ursula pictures by Carpaccio, which have since become so well known; and he put into this course much of his most earnest and most definitely Christian exhortations. At the first lecture

[1] *Val d'Arno* (1873) and *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence* (1874) are in Vol. XXIII., with other Florentine matter; the lectures on Birds (1873) and Mountains (1874) were partly incorporated in *Love's Meinie* (Vol. XXV.) and *Deucalion* (Vol. XXVI.) respectively.

[2] *Ruskin in Oxford and Other Studies*, by G. W. Kitchin, p. 41. A similar account of the incident is given in "Ruskin as an Oxford Lecturer," by James Manning Bruce, in *The Century Magazine*, February 1898, p. 593. The passage in the lecture will be found below, p. 497.

of the course he had distinguished visitors, to his no small embarrassment, as he describes to Mrs. Arthur Severn:—

"C. C. C., OXFORD,
"*7th Nov.*, '77.

". . . I've never had such a terrible time. . . . I tumbled into the last day of the University Commission, and instead of only Acland in my little private ante-lecture-room, there was Lord Selborne waiting for me, all by himself, and I had to take him in to the lecture, and couldn't *get* him in! nor myself neither at first, for the room was crammed, and the crowd in actual corridor as at door of a theatre; and poor Eleanor and Mr. Furneaux didn't get in, I believe, for I had to think of everything at once; and Mrs. Acland couldn't get in herself, but begged me to take in somebody else instead of her; and Mrs. Liddell and Alice couldn't get into Wonderland a bit,[1] nor the Dean neither. . . . But at last I got Selborne into his place, and then had to invoke Mr. Macdonald from afar, and I was frightened, dreadfully, for I had never thought of a word I was going to say till the day before, and had scrawled it too small, and couldn't read, for it was a dark day and I had no spectacles.

"But I began clearly, and got them interested, and the lecture was as good, I think, as I ever gave, and the audience all as quiet as mice to hear. I got some bits read at last, and it was all right; only then I had to go all over my schools with Lord Selborne and the Commissioners and say, at a shot, what I wanted done, and I didn't know a bit what the Dean wanted me to say, nor Acland, and they both beside me, and it was terrible; and I didn't sleep, and got up at two in the morning, and arranged drawers till four."

The course as a whole was equally successful, and the last lecture as crowded as any of them. "Finished the most important course I have ever yet given in Oxford," he wrote in his diary (December 2, 1877), "and I am fairly cheerful in sense of remaining power for great tasks, if I am worthy of doing them; the spirit willing enough, and the rest weak." "I gave yesterday," he wrote on the same day to his dear friend, Miss Susan Beever, "the twelfth and last of my course of lectures this term, to a room crowded by six hundred people, two-thirds members of the University, and with its door wedged open by those who could not get in; this interest of theirs being granted to me, I doubt not, because for the first time in Oxford I have been able to speak to them boldly of immortal life. I intended when I began the course only to have read *Modern Painters* to them; but when I began, some of your favourite bits interested the men so much, and brought so much larger a proportion of undergraduates than usual,

[1] Miss Alice Liddell (Mrs. Hargreaves), for whom "Lewis Carroll" wrote *Alice in Wonderland*. Eleanor (Mrs. Furneaux) is Mr. Arthur Severn's twin-sister.

that I took pains to reinforce and press them home; and people say I have never given so useful a course yet."[1]

The last lecture of the course was published by Ruskin in the following month in the *Nineteenth Century*, and is here reprinted. The notes of the other lectures are printed from the author's MS. at Brantwood.

The *illustrations* in this volume, while including all that have appeared in previous editions of the several books, comprise also many which are new, and will, it is hoped, contribute to the better enjoyment of the text.

The *frontispiece* is a reduction, by photogravure, of a sketch by Gainsborough, which is at Brantwood, and which Ruskin accounted one of his principal treasures. It is referred to several times in this volume.[2]

The illustrations in *Lectures on Landscape* are reduced[3] from the edition of 1897 in imperial quarto. That edition contained, however, five plates which do not appear in this volume. Of these, four have been given in previous volumes;[4] and one is reserved for what, in a complete edition of Ruskin's Works, is its more appropriate place.[5] One additional plate (VIII.) is introduced—a photogravure of studies by Ruskin of a Greek terra-cotta; this also is referred to several times in his notes and lectures.[6] The chromo-lithographs of Turner's "Dudley" and "Flint" are made, as in the earlier edition, not from the originals, but from copies by Mr. Arthur Severn. Though the scale is in this volume reduced, a comparison will show, the editors believe, that the results are by no means inferior.

The illustrations in *The Eagle's Nest* are all new, being taken from examples in the Ruskin Art Collection at Oxford. An engraving of the "Daughter of Roberto Strozzi (XIX.) is No. 42 in the Standard Series; our reproduction, however, is made from a photograph of the original picture, now in the Berlin Gallery. It is mentioned in the text (p. 223), and is of peculiar interest as the only portrait of a child by Titian which we possess. "Were I a painter, I should be in despair," exclaimed the painter's friend Aretino, in a letter dated July 6, 1542; "it deserves the first place among all pictures that have ever been painted, and all that may be produced in the future."[7] But Aretino wrote before the time of Reynolds. "Much more delightful" in Ruskin's eyes is the picture at Windsor of the little Princess Matilda with her Skye terrier. Ruskin placed a mezzotint of it in his

[1] *Hortus Inclusus* (reprinted in a later volume of the edition).
[2] See below, pp. 393, 396, 481.
[3] Except the plate of Turner's "Swans," which is given in the same size.
[4] For particulars, see the Bibliographical Note, p. 6.
[5] See below, p. 50 *n*.
[6] See Vol. XX. p. 408; Vol. XXI. p. 180; and, in this volume, p. 50.

Rudimentary Series (No. 125); our plate (XX.) is, again, made from a photograph of the original picture.

The next two plates are examples of Ruskin's drawings of birds. The eagle's head is No. 165 in the Educational Series (see Vol. XXI. p. 89); and the kingfisher, No. 201 in the Rudimentary (*ibid.*, p. 227). The present study was made "with dominant reference to colour"; another study "with dominant reference to shade" is Plate LVIII. in Vol. XXI.

The plate of "The Twelve Heraldic Ordinaries" (XXIII.) is here reduced from an engraving made by Mr. Allen for the "Oxford Art School Series" (Vol. XXI. p. 314).

The illustrations in *Ariadne Florentina* include all those which have previously appeared in that volume, except that one of the original illustrations has already been given in an improved form in Vol. XX. (see below, p. 406 *n.*), and three new plates are added. Some explanations about Ruskin's illustrations have already been given (p. xxxviii.); it must here be added that the autotypes of early Italian prints given by him were not altogether satisfactory representations of the originals. In one case Ruskin himself substituted in the second edition a better reproduction than had appeared in the first (see Bibliographical Note, p. 297). For this edition photogravures have in all cases been made from fine impressions of the plates in the British Museum; the engravings, hitherto reduced, are now given of their full size. These remarks apply to Plates XXVI.–XXXI., XXXIII., and XXXIV. The woodcut, and the two enlargements from woodcuts, by Bewick (Plate XXV.), have hitherto been given by autotype process; they have now been facsimiled on wood by Mr. H. S. Uhlrich. Michael Angelo's Sibyl (XXXII.) is represented by photogravure from a photograph of the original. The engraving by Albert Dürer (XXXV.) is reproduced from a fine impression of the plate in the British Museum.

Of the three additional plates, the first is of "Debonnaireté" (XXIV.). It is a photogravure made, by kind permission of the University authorities, from the drawing in the Douce Collection at Oxford. Particulars are given below the text (p. 314 *n.*); this figure from the now destroyed Painted Chamber at Westminster will, as now reproduced, enable the reader the better to follow Ruskin's long discussion of it. The other plates, showing respectively Holbein's "Erasmus" (XXXVI.) and Dürer's (XXXVII.), are similarly introduced to add interest to Ruskin's analysis of the two works. The "Holbein" is from a photograph of the original picture in the Louvre; the Dürer, from an impression of the plate in the British Museum.

The woodcuts from Holbein (Figs. 4, 5, 8, and 9) are printed, as in previous editions of *Ariadne*, from the facsimiles by Arthur Burgess.

E. T. C.

# I

# LECTURES ON LANDSCAPE

## (LECTURES DELIVERED 1871; PUBLISHED 1898)

# LECTURES ON LANDSCAPE

## DELIVERED AT OXFORD
### IN LENT TERM, 1871

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, D.C.L., LL.D.

SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART

*WITH TWENTY-TWO PLATES*

GEORGE ALLEN, SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON

AND

156 CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON

1897

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[*Bibliographical Note.*—These lectures on Landscape were delivered in the Theatre of the Museum of Oxford in Lent Term, 1871, on the following dates: I. Thursday, January 26; II. Thursday, February 9; III. Thursday, February 23. To the announcement of the lectures in the *University Gazette* (January 20, 1871) was added an intimation that "The Professor desires also to see Members of the University who wish to study with him in the University Galleries, on Tuesdays and Saturdays, between Two and Three o'clock, commencing on Saturday the 28th inst."

The lectures were reported in the *Athenæum* of February 4, February 18, and March 4, 1871, under the following titles (none being announced by the lecturer): I. "The Aim and Study of Landscape"; II. "The Relation of Light and Shade to Colour in Landscape"; III. "The Greek and Gothic Schools."

These reports were reprinted in *Igdrasil*, vol. iii., March 1892, pp. 248–254, and thence in the privately-issued *Ruskiniana*, part ii., 1892, pp. 218–224.

Twenty-six years after their delivery the lectures were printed from the author's MS. in a volume, which had the title-page as shown on the preceding leaf.

Imperial 4to, pp. 84. Two blank pages; Half-title, p. 3; Title-page, p. 5, with the publisher's imprint; at the foot of the reverse: "Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co. | At the Ballantyne Press." On p. 7 was the following:—

## PREFATORY NOTE

"THESE Lectures on Landscape were given at Oxford on January 20,[1] February 9, and February 23, 1871. They were not public Lectures like Professor Ruskin's other courses, but addressed only to undergraduates who had joined his class. They were illustrated by pictures from his collection, of which several are here reproduced, and by others which may be seen in the Oxford University Galleries or in the Ruskin Drawing School.

"W. G. C."

Contents (here p. 9), p. 9 (including "Index"); List of Plates, p. 11; Text of the lectures (with separate fly-title to each), pp. 13–77; Index, pp. 79–84 (printer's imprint repeated at the foot).

Though dated 1897, the volume was not issued till February 4, 1898; in green buckram, with gilt top, lettered across the back, "Lectures | on | Land- | Scape | John | Ruskin | George Allen"; and on the front cover, "Lectures | on | Landscape | John Ruskin" | embossed on a gold panel. 1000 copies. Price 42s. (reduced in July 1900 to 30s.), the edition in this form being still current. The plates are also sold separately without the text (25s. the set, or 3s. singly). There were also 150 special copies on unbleached Arnold hand-made paper, with India proofs of the plates, and

[1] A misprint for January 26.

bound in half-vellum; price 84s. In these special copies the swans' beaks on Plate VII. were (as in this volume) touched by hand with colour.

The "List of Plates" (p. 11) was as follows, an additional column being here added by way of collation with this edition :—

| | *To face page* | *In this Edition* |
|---|---|---|
| Vesuvius in Repose, after Turner | 16 | Plate I. |
| Vesuvius in Eruption, after Turner | 16 | Plate II. |
| Scarborough, after Turner | 17 | Vol. XIII. Plate XII. |
| Eggleston Abbey, after Turner | 19 | Plate III. |
| St. Gothard, after Turner | 27 | Plate IV. |
| Blair Athol (*Liber Studiorum*), after Turner | 39 | Plate V. |
| Gneiss Rock in Glenfinlas, after John Ruskin | 39 | Vol. XII. Plate I. |
| Dumblane (*Liber Studiorum*), after Turner | 39 | Plate VI. |
| Swans, after Turner | 50 | Plate VII. |
| Filippo Lippi's "Madonna" | 58 | *Fors Clavigera.* |
| Reynolds's "Lady with the Brooch" | 60 | Plate IX. |
| Dragon from Turner's "Garden of the Hesperides" ("Quivi Trovammo") | 69 | Vol. VII. Plate 78. |
| Landscape in Raphael's "Holy Family" | 71 | Vol. V. Plate 11. |
| Dudley, after Turner | 71 | Plate X. |
| Flint Castle, after Turner | 71 | Plate XI. |
| "Psyche received into Heaven," after Sir E. Burne-Jones | 72 | Plate XII. |
| "Aesacus and Hesperie" (*Liber Studiorum*), after Turner | 73 | Plate XIII. |
| "Procris and Cephalus" (*Liber Studiorum*), after Turner | 73 | Plate XIV. |
| Turner's Etching of "Procris and Cephalus" | 74 | Plate XV. |
| The Watermill (*Liber Studiorum*), after Turner | 74 | Plate XVI. |
| Grand Chartreuse (*Liber Studiorum*), after Turner | 75 | Plate XVII. |
| L'Aiguillette, after Turner | 76 | Plate XVIII. |

WOODCUTS IN THE TEXT

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Snail Shell | *On page* 26 | Page 24. |
| Lancet Window at Dumblane | „ 40 | Vol. XII. Plate IV. |

NOTE.—The Photogravures from *Liber Studiorum* should be seen with the light falling from the left hand, in order to get the true effect of the raised outline in the originals.

In this edition it has been necessary to reduce all the plates, except that of "Swans, after Turner."

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*Variæ Lectiones.*—The edition of 1897 was printed from a fair copy of the MS. which was made in 1871 by the author's servant, Crawley, and revised by Ruskin himself in that year (see above, Introduction, p. xxx.). Some differences, however, crept into the print. The following is a list of the variations :—

§ 7, line 3, the 1897 edition reads "subjects," but Ruskin wrote "subject"; line 15, 1897 edition reads ". . . have humanity in you enough in you to interpret . . . ," following the MS., but Ruskin in inserting the second "in you" forgot to strike out the first.

§ 8, line 2, "The" in 1897 edition is here corrected from the MS. to "Its."

§ 11, line 18, 1897 edition reads "he gets tired"; the draft MS. has "one gets tired," which seems better to express the author's meaning, as shown earlier in the section, namely, that in such detail the ordinary painter gets tired.

§ 14, line 3, 1897 edition, following Crawley's copy, reads "satiated," but "vitiated" in the author's own draft seems the right word.

§ 30, line 7, for a passage which dropped out in the 1897 edition, see p. 32 *n.*

§ 31, line 5, "black" in the 1897 edition, but "blues" in the MS., which is the right word (see p. 25), and is therefore here followed; line 8, 1897 edition, following Crawley's copy, reads "these," but Ruskin corrected the word to "their."

§ 42, line 9, "simply" in the 1897 edition, but "only" in the MS.; line 16, "of" is now inserted by the editors.

§ 52, line 6, 1897 edition alters "this" to "the"; "this" shows that Ruskin exhibited the example at the lecture.

§ 60, line 12, the 1897 edition reads "dressed neither," but Ruskin wrote "neither dressed."

§ 62, lines 14 and 15, in the 1897 edition: ". . . oppose Gothic passion to Greek temperance; yet Gothic rigidity, *στάσις* of *ἕκστασις*, to Greek action and *ἐλευθερία*." It is so written in Crawley's copy, but the reading does not make sense. A parallel passage in *Val d'Arno* (see below, p. 50 *n.*) clearly shows that the correct reading is the one now adopted in the text.

§ 64, last lines, the author's text is here restored from the MS., the 1897 edition reading ". . . against Gothic lucidity of colour and acuteness of angle; and Greek simplicity and cold veracity against Gothic rapture of trusted vision."

§ 69, line 22, the 1897 edition omits "firmness and."

§ 86, line 5, the 1897 edition reads "This" in place of "this—and that."

§ 87, line 7, for a passage omitted in the 1897 edition, see p. 62 *n.*

§ 91, line 13, here the 1897 edition reads "displaying" instead of "defining," which is the word in the MS.

§ 93, line 15, "Hesperia" is here corrected to "Hesperie"; line 13, for Ruskin's word "subjects," the 1897 edition reads "landscapes."

§ 96, line 22, the word "clumsy" before "country boys" was omitted in the 1897 edition.]

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# LECTURES ON LANDSCAPE

## LECTURE I[1]

### OUTLINE

IN my inaugural lecture,[2] I stated that while holding this professorship I should direct you, in your practical exercises, chiefly to natural history and landscape. And having in the course of the past year laid the foundational elements of art sufficiently before you, I will invite you, now, to enter on real work with me; and accordingly I propose during this and the following term to give you what practical leading I can in elementary study of

[1] [Delivered on January 26, 1871. Among Ruskin's MSS. is a sheet labelled "1st., I believe, of Lectures on Landscape." It contains the following introductory remarks, not printed in the edition of 1897:—

"I am sure, gentlemen, that you feel I must have had strict reasons for a proceeding so painful to myself as the refusal to-day of the honour hitherto done us by the presence of ladies. I did so because I felt it to be absolutely necessary that you should understand the work you are now to be invited to enter upon as being integrally a part of your University studies, and as requiring for success in it, application as severe and accurate as those branches of them which you take into the schools.

"You were particularly likely to mistake the character of the present course, because landscape sketching has been always thought of as an amusement. I hope that I shall not entirely reverse that impression, and make you think it altogether dull; but assuredly you will not only get pleasure from it, as I must direct your practice by severe work, such as I should have no hope of inducing even the most earnest women to undertake. And besides this, it is necessary that if I allow myself in any expression which you may consider speculative or sentimental, you should know that it is not intended to please a girl audience, but is spoken in full trust that such degrees of imagination or of passion as I may appeal to are indeed commonly in the hearts of English gentlemen in their youth. I had other more directly practical reasons also. It is impossible to show examples properly to a large audience; and I want now to make my lectures less formal; and to be relieved from the sense that I must always say something, if I can, worth hearing, since so many people have come to hear it. If I can say, during the hour, what will be permanently useful to one or two of you, I shall do my duty much better than by saying what is only interesting at the time to many."]

[2] [*Lectures on Art*, 1870, § 23 (Vol. XX. p. 35).]

landscape, and of a branch of natural history which will form a kind of centre for all the rest—Ichthyology.[1]

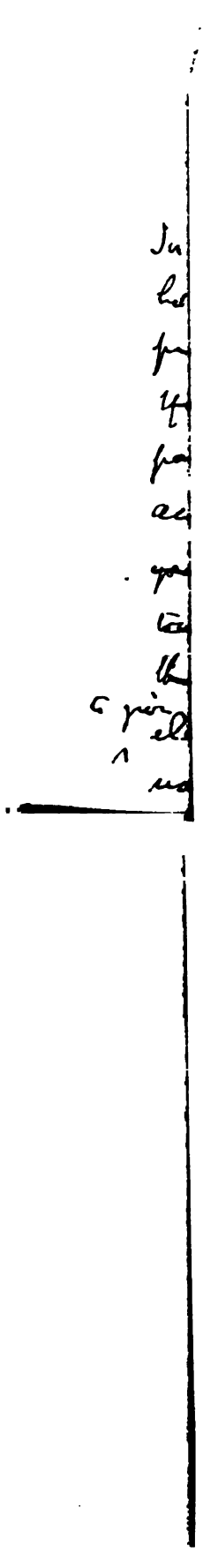
In the outset I must shortly state to you the position which landscape painting and animal painting hold towards the higher branches of art.

2. Landscape painting is the thoughtful and passionate representation of the physical conditions appointed for human existence.[2] It imitates the aspects, and records the phenomena, of the visible things which are dangerous or beneficial to men; and displays the human methods of dealing with these, and of enjoying them or suffering from them, which are either exemplary or deserving of sympathetic contemplation. Animal painting investigates the laws of greater and less nobility of character in organic form, as comparative anatomy examines those of greater and less development in organic structure; and the function of animal painting is to bring into notice the minor and unthought-of conditions of power or beauty, as that of physiology is to ascertain the minor conditions of adaptation.

3. Questions as to the purpose of arrangements or the use of the organs of an animal are, however, no less within the province of the painter than of the physiologist, and are indeed more likely to commend themselves to you through drawing than dissection. For as you dissect an animal you generally assume its form to be necessary, and only examine how it is constructed; but in drawing the outer form itself attentively you are led necessarily to consider the mode of life for which it is disposed, and therefore to be struck by any awkwardness or apparent uselessness in its parts. After sketching one day several heads of birds it became a vital matter of interest to me to know the

[1] [For Ruskin's intention in this matter, see the Introduction, above, pp. xxv.–xxvi. In the MS. book which contains the first draft of the Lectures on Landscape there are several pages of notes on fishes—classifying and discussing various orders in accordance with differences of form and colour, and containing references to plates in Cuvier's *Natural History*, from which Ruskin's points were to be illustrated. Compare also Vol. XX. pp. 196–197.]

[2] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. i. § 4 (Vol. VII. p. 255); and *Laws of Fésole*, ch. viii. § 16 (Vol. XV. p. 438).]



J M W Turner, R A

Allen & Co Sc.

Vesuvius in Repose

use of the bony process on the head of the hornbill; but on asking a great physiologist, I found that it appeared to him an absurd question, and was certainly an unanswerable one.

4. I have limited, you have just heard, landscape painting to the representation of phenomena relating to human life. You will scarcely be disposed to admit the propriety of such a limitation; and you will still less be likely to conceive its necessary strictness and severity, unless I convince you of it by somewhat detailed examples.

Here are two landscapes by Turner in his greatest time —Vesuvius in repose, Vesuvius in eruption.[1]

One is a beautiful harmony of cool colour; and the other of hot, and they are both exquisitely designed in ornamental lines. But they are not painted for those qualities. They are painted because the state of the scene in one case is full of delight to men; and in the other, of pain and danger. And it is not Turner's object at all to exhibit or illustrate natural phenomena, however interesting in themselves. He does not want to paint blue mist in order to teach you the nature of evaporation; nor this lava stream, to explain to you the operation of gravity on ponderous and viscous materials. He paints the blue mist, because it brings life and joy to men, and the lava stream because it is death to them.

5. Again: here are two sea-pieces by Turner of the same period—photographs from them at least. One is a calm on the shore at Scarborough; the other, the wreck of an Indiaman.[2]

These also are each painted with exquisitely artistic purpose: the first, in opposition of local black to diffused sunshine; the second, in the decorative grouping of white spots

[1] [For these drawings (here reproduced, Plates I. and II.), which were both in Ruskin's collection, see Vol. XIII. pp. 427, 428, 606.]

[2] [Here Ruskin showed the "Scarborough" from *The Harbours of England* (see Vol. XIII. p. 73, and Plate XII.), and a photograph of the "Wreck of an Indiaman," now No. 143 in the Reference Series (Vol. XXI. p. 40); the picture was exhibited at the Leeds Exhibition of 1839.]

on a dark ground. That decorative purpose of dappling, or ποικιλία,[1] is as studiously and deliciously carried out by Turner with the Dædalus side of him, in the inlaying of these white spots on the Indiaman's deck, as if he were working a precious toy in ebony and ivory. But Turner did not paint either of the sea-pieces for the sake of these decorous arrangements; neither did he paint the Scarborough, as a professor of physical science, to show you the level of low tide on the Yorkshire coast; nor the Indiaman to show you the force of impact in a liquid mass of sea-water of given momentum. He painted this to show you the daily course of quiet human work and happiness, and that, to enable you to conceive something of uttermost human misery—both ordered by the power of the great deep.

6. You may easily—you must, perhaps, for a little time—suspect me of exaggeration in this statement. It is so natural to suppose that the main interest of landscape is essentially in rocks and water and sky; and that figures are to be put, like the salt and mustard to a dish, only to give it a flavour.

Put all that out of your heads at once. The interest of a landscape consists wholly in its relation either to figures present—or to figures past—or to human powers conceived. The most splendid drawing of the chain of the Alps, irrespective of their relation to humanity, is no more true landscape than a painting of this bit of stone. For, as natural philosophers, there is no bigness or littleness to you. This stone is just as interesting to you, or ought to be, as if it was a million times as big. There is no more sublimity—*per se*—in ground sloped at an angle of forty-five, than in ground level; nor in a perpendicular fracture of a rock, than in a horizontal one. The only thing that makes the one more interesting to you in a landscape than the other, is that you could tumble over the perpendicular

[1] [On this subject compare Vol. XX. p. 349 *n.*]

Vesuvius in Eruption

fracture—and couldn't tumble over the other. A cloud, looked at as a cloud only, is no more a subject for painting than so much feculence in dirty water. It is merely dirty air, or at best a chemical solution ill made. That it is worthy of being painted at all depends upon its being the means of nourishment and chastisement to men, or the dwelling-place of imaginary gods. There's a bit of blue sky and cloud by Turner—one of the loveliest ever painted by human hand.[1] But, as a mere pattern of blue and white, he had better have painted a jay's wing: this was only painted by him—and is, in reality, only pleasant to you—because it signifies the coming of a gleam of sweet sunshine in windy weather; and the wind is worth thinking of only because it fills the sails of ships, and the sun because it warms the sailors.

7. Now, it is most important that you should convince yourselves of and fully enter into this truth, because all the difficulty in choosing subject arises from mistakes about it. I daresay some of you who are fond of sketching have gone out often in the most beautiful country, and yet with the feeling that there was no good subject to be found in it. That always arises from your not having sympathy enough with its vital character, and looking for physical picturesqueness instead. On the contrary, there are crude efforts at landscape-painting, made continually upon the most splendid physical phenomena, in America, and other countries without any history. It is not of the slightest use.[2] Niagara, or the North Pole and the Aurora Borealis, won't make a landscape; but a ditch at Iffley will, if you

[1] [Probably Ruskin's copy of a sky by Turner (engraved in *Modern Painters*): No. 98 in the Reference Series (Vol. XXI. p. 36).]

[2] [The newspaper report has:—

"To gather together splendid physical phenomena for the sake of the momentary sensation on the spectator is not the object of true landscape. There is a well-known American painter who seems to make that his aim. He may be a skilful imitator of nature, but he is not in the true sense a landscape-painter."

A passage in the *Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton* (vol. i. p. 151), reprinted in a later volume of this edition, suggests that the reference was to the works of Frederick E. Church (born 1826).]

have humanity enough in you to interpret the feelings of hedgers and ditchers, and frogs.[1]

8. Next, here[2] is one of the most beautiful landscapes ever painted, the best I have next to the Greta and Tees.[3] Its subject physically is a mere bank of grass above a stream with some wych-elms and willows. A level-topped bank; the water has cut its way down through the soft alluvion of an elevated plain to the limestone rock at the bottom.

Had this scene been in America, no mortal could have made a landscape of it. It is nothing but a grass bank with some not very pretty trees scattered over it, wholly without grouping. The stream at the bottom is rocky indeed, but its rocks are mean, flat, and of a dull yellow colour. The sky is grey and shapeless. There's absolutely nothing to paint anywhere of essential landscape subject, as commonly understood.

Now see what the landscape consists in, which I have told you is one of the most beautiful ever painted by man. There's first a little bit of it left nearly wild, not quite wild; there's a cart and rider's track through it among the copse; and then, standing simply on the wild moss-troopers' ground, the scattered ruins of a great abbey, seen so dimly, that they seem to be fading out of sight, in colour as in time.

These two things together, the wild copse wood and the ruin, take you back into the life of the fourteenth century. The one is the border-riders' kingdom; the other that of peace which has striven against border-riding—how vainly! Both these are remains of the past. But the outhouses and

[1] [The MS. adds "There it is for you," *i.e.*, the plate of "Hedging and Ditching" from Turner's *Liber Studiorum* (for another reference to it, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v., Vol. VII. p. 433). Ruskin proceeded to compare the plate with some of Claude's. The passage was not, however, written out; the notes in the MS. being "Better than Claude's figures; sympathy in Turner, true ditchers; in Claude's, affected, with Moses."]

[2] ["Egglestone Abbey," here reproduced (Plate III.). For other references to the drawing, see Vol. XIII. pp. 343, 430, 573, 592.]

[3] [Presented by Ruskin to his Drawing School at Oxford: Standard Series, No. 2 (see Vol. XXI. p. 11); and for other references to it, see below, pp. 69, 172, 514.]

Eggleston Abbey

refectory of the abbey have been turned into a farmhouse, and that is inhabited, and in front of it the Mistress is feeding her chickens. You see the country is perfectly quiet and innocent, for there is no trace of a fence anywhere; the cattle have strayed down to the riverside, it being a hot day; and some rest in the shade and two in the water.

They could not have done so at their ease had the river not been humanised. Only a little bit of its stony bed is left; a mill weir, thrown across, stays the water in a perfectly clear and delicious pool; to show how clear it is, Turner has put the only piece of playing colour in all the picture into the reflections in this. One cow is white, another white and red, evidently as clean as morning dew can wash their sides. They could not have been so in a country where there was the least coal smoke; so Turner has put a wreath of perfectly white smoke through the trees; and lest that should not be enough to show you they burnt wood, he has made his foreground of a piece of copse just lopped, with the new faggots standing up against it; and this still not being enough to give you the idea of perfect cleanliness, he has covered the stones of the river-bed with white clothes laid out to dry; and that not being enough yet, for the river-bed might be clean though nothing else was, he has put a quantity more hanging over the abbey walls.

9. Only *natural phenomena in their direct relation to humanity*—these are to be your subjects in landscape. Rocks and water and air may no more be painted for their own sakes, than the armour carved without the warrior.

But, secondly. I said landscape is to be a *passionate representation* of these things. It must be done, that is to say, with strength and depth of soul. This is indeed to some extent merely the particular application of a principle that has no exception. If you are without strong passions, you cannot be a painter at all. The laying of paint by an insensitive person, whatever it endeavours to represent, is not painting, but daubing or plastering; and that, observe,

irrespective of the boldness or minuteness of the work. An insensitive person will daub with a camel's-hair brush and ultramarine; and a passionate one will paint with mortar and a trowel.

10. But far more than common passion is necessary to paint landscape. The physical conditions there are so numerous, and the spiritual ones so occult, that you are sure to be overpowered by the materialism, unless your sentiment is strong. No man is naturally likely to think first of anatomy in painting a pretty woman; but he is very apt to do so in painting a mountain. No man of ordinary sense will take pleasure in features that have no meaning, but he may easily take it in heath, woods or waterfalls, that have no expression. So that it needs much greater strength of heart and intellect to paint landscape than figure:[1] many commonplace persons, bred in good schools, have painted the figure pleasantly or even well; but none but the strongest—John Bellini, Titian, Velasquez, Tintoret, Mantegna, Sandro Botticelli, Carpaccio and Turner—have ever painted a fragment of good landscape.[2] In missal painting exquisite figure-drawing is frequent, and landscape backgrounds in late works are elaborate; but I only know thoroughly good landscape in one book; and I have examined—I speak deliberately—thousands.[3]

11. For one thing, the passion is necessary for the mere quantity of design. In good art, whether painting or sculpture, I have again and again told you every touch is necessary and beautifully intended.[4] Now it falls within the compass of ordinary application to place rightly all the folds of drapery or gleams of light on a chain, or ornaments in a pattern; but when it comes to placing every leaf in a tree, the painter gets tired. Here, for instance,

[1] [Compare the lecture on landscape given in 1884, reprinted in a later volume from *Studies in Ruskin*.]

[2] [But compare § 77, p. 57, where Van Eyke is added to the company.]

[3] [The "one book" is the "Grimani Missal": see below, § 77, p. 57. For Ruskin's study of illuminated MSS., see Vol. XII. p. lxviii.]

[4] [See, for instance, *Lectures on Art*, § 71, and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 179 (Vol. XX. pp. 78, 327).]

is a little bit of Sandro Botticelli background;[1] I have purposefully sketched it in the slightest way, that you might see how the entire value of it depends on thoughtful placing. There is no texture aimed at, no completion, scarcely any variety of light and shade; but by mere care in the placing the thing is beautiful. Well, every leaf, every cloud, every touch is placed with the same care in great work; and when this is done as by John Bellini in the picture of Peter Martyr,[2] or as it was by Titian in the great Peter Martyr, with every leaf in a wood, one gets tired. I know no other such landscape in the world as that is, or as that was.

12. Perhaps you think on such conditions you never can paint landscape at all. Well, great landscape certainly not; but pleasant and useful landscape, yes; provided only the passion you bring to it be true and pure. The degree of it you cannot command; the genuineness of it you can —yes, and the depth of source also. Tintoret's passion may be like the Reichenbach,[3] and yours only like a little dripping Holy well, but both equally from deep springs.

13. But though the virtue of all painting (and similarly of sculpture and every other art) is in passion, I must not have you begin by working passionately. The discipline of youth, in all its work, is in cooling and curbing itself, as the discipline of age is in warming and urging itself; you know the Bacchic chorus of old men in Plato's *Laws*.[4] To

[1] [Here Ruskin showed his study of a few leaves in the background of Botticelli's "Spring": No. 252 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 97).]

[2] [National Gallery, No. 812. For other references to the picture, see §§ 77, 94, and *The Relation of Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, § 13 (below, pp. 57, 66, 85); and for Titian's "Peter Martyr," destroyed by fire, Vol. III. p. 28 *n*.]

[3] [For another reference to the Falls of the Reichenbach at Meiringen, see Vol. XVIII. p. xliv. Ruskin had placed photographs of Turner's drawings of the falls in the Educational Series: Nos. 279, 280 (Vol. XXI. p. 99).]

[4] [Book ii. 664–666. Of Plato's three choirs, the third was to be "the choir of elder men, who are from thirty to sixty years of age." When a man "has reached forty years, and is feasted at public banquets, he may invite not only the other Gods, but Dionysus above all, to the mystery and festivity of the elder men, making use of the wine which he has given them to be the cure of the sourness of old age; that in age we may renew our youth, and forget our sorrows; and also in order that the nature of the soul, like iron melted in the fire, may become softer and more impressible" (Jowett's translation).]

the end of life, indeed, the strength of a man's finest nature is shown in due continence; but that is because the finest natures remain young to the death: and for you the first thing you have to do in art (as in life) is to be quiet and firm—quiet, above everything;[1] and modest, with this most essential modesty, that you must like the landscape you are going to draw better than you expect to like your drawing of it, however well it may succeed. If you would not rather have the real thing than your sketch of it, you are not in a right state of mind for sketching at all. If you only think of the scene, "what a nice sketch this will make!" be assured you will never make a nice sketch of it. You may think you have produced a beautiful work; nay, perhaps the public and many fair judges will agree with you; but I tell you positively, there will be no enduring value in what you have thus done.[2] Whereas if you think of the scene, "Ah, if I could only get some shadow or scrawl of this to carry away with me, how glad I should be!"—then whatever you do will be, according to your strength, good and progressive: it may be feeble, or much faultful, but it will be vital and essentially precious.

[1] [The first draft of the lecture has here an additional passage, first struck through but afterwards marked "stet":—

"... quiet, above everything. Scholars inside and outside—slow, cool, silent, gentle: in a word, the reverse of everything that most of the influences of the world round you would make you. The type of you, as the world would make you, is a Gennesaret pig;—hurried, hot, squeaking, violent, and in competition—downwards. Reverse all that precisely and scientifically, and grow in everything as a vine grows, upwards and along, not competing with other vines, but at its own grace, in its own time. That was why I quoted the first Psalm at the end of my first lecture. Everything that you do will prosper if you grow as a tree that brings forth its fruit in its season, and not before."

For the reference here, see *Lectures on Art*, § 30 (Vol. XX. p. 44).]

[2] [In another draft there is an additional passage here:—

"... I tell you positively it will be bad art, having no one great or vital quality, whatever the skill of it. It may be an elaborate water-colour, all purple and gold, with dextrous crags and aerial clouds, and warm set against cold, and dark against light, and all the rest of it. But I tell you positively, if you like your drawing better than the scene, your drawing must be wholly bad, rotten to the core. But if you think of the scene ... vital, and essentially good."

The MS. then continues, "Now, story of Crossing the Brook." Ruskin tells the story in a letter to Professor Norton, dated August 7, 1870 (see a later volume of this edition).]

14. Now, it is not possible for you to command this state of mind, or anything like it, in yourselves at once. Nay, in all probability your eyes are so vitiated by the false popular art surrounding us now on all sides, that you cannot see the delicate reality though you try; but even though you may not care for the truth, you can act as if you did, and tell it.

Now, therefore, observe this following quite plain direction. Whenever you set yourself to draw anything, consider only how best you may give a person who has not seen the place, a true idea of it. Use any means in your power to do that, and don't think of the person for whom you are drawing as a connoisseur, but as a person of ordinary sense and feeling. Don't get artist-like qualities for him: but first give him the pleasant sensation of being at the place, then show him how the land lies, how the water runs, how the wind blows, and so on. Always think of the public as Molière of his old woman;[1] you have done nothing really great or good if you can't please her.

15. Now beginning wisely, so as to lose no time or labour, you will learn to paint all the conditions of quiet light and sky, before you attempt those of variable light and cloud. Do not trouble yourselves with or allow yourselves to be tempted by any effects that are brilliant or tremendous; except only that from the beginning I recommend you to watch always for sunrise;[2] to keep a little diary of the manner of it, and to have beside your window a small sketch-book, with pencil cut over night, and colours moist. The one indulgence which I would have you allow yourselves in fast colouring, for some time, is the endeavour to secure some record at the instant of the colours of morning clouds; while, if they are merely white or grey or blue, you must get an outline of them with pencil. You will soon feel by this means what are the real difficulties to

[1] [The reference is to the story that Molière first read his plays to his housekeeper, with a view to discovering how an audience would take them.]

[2] [Compare Vol. XXI. p. 106, and the other passages there referred to.]

be encountered in all landscape colouring, and your eyes will be educated to quantity and harmonious action of forms.

But for the rest—learn to paint everything in the quietest and simplest light. First outline your whole subject completely, with delicate sharp pencil line. If you don't get more than that, let your outline be a finished and lovely diagram of the whole.

16. All the objects are then to be painted of their proper colours, matching them as nearly as you can, in the manner that a missal is painted, filling the outlined shapes neatly up to their junctions; reinforcing afterwards when necessary, but as little as possible; but, above all, knowing precisely what the light is, and where it is.*

17. I have brought two old-fashioned coloured engravings,[1] which are a precise type of the style I want you to begin with. Finished from corner to corner, as well as the painter easily could; everything done to good purpose, nothing for vain glory; nothing in haste or affectation, nothing in feverish or morbid excitement. The observation is accurate; the sentiment, though childish, deep and pure;

* Make a note of these points:

1. Date, time of day, temperature, direction and force of wind.
2. Roughly, by compass, the direction in which you are looking; and angle of the light with respect to it.
3. Angle subtended by picture, and distance of nearest object in it.

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[1] [Two coloured prints of Isola Bella, from pp. 116, 118 of a *Picturesque Tour from Geneva to Milan by Way of the Simplon . . . engraved from designs by J. and J. Lory of Neufchâtel.* London: Published by R. Ackermann, at his Repository of Arts, 1820. Ruskin placed these prints in the Educational Series at Oxford (Nos. 103 and 104); for notes upon them, see Vol. XXI. p. 129. An early draft of the passage shows that Ruskin had also in mind another coloured print:—

"... don't think of the person for whom you are drawing as a connoisseur, but have an ideal Molière's old woman, who will stand no nonsense, and admit no necessity of anything to the composition. You may imagine your ideal old woman to be a man of science if you like—there's no harm in that—but she must neither be a painter nor précieuse, [only] a person of ordinary sense and feeling; and be sure that such a person will be grateful to you, first of all, if you can make him feel as if he were at the place, and that you ought to do that if you can do nothing more.

"Now you may learn much in this matter from looking at the common coloured prints sold at any popular watering-place, which are bought for reminiscence only. I don't mean, of course, what vulgar people would buy, but what nice people would buy who know little or nothing of art,

and the effect of light, for common work, quite curiously harmonious and deceptive.

They are, in spite of their weaknesses, absolutely the only landscapes I could show you which give you a real idea of the places, or which put your minds into the tone which, if you were happy and at ease, they would take in the air and light of Italy.

I dwell on the necessity of completion especially, because I have lost much time myself from my sympathy with the feverish intensity of the minds of the great engravers; and from always fastening on one or two points of my subject and neglecting the rest.

18. We have seen, then, that every subject is to be taken up first in its terminal lines, then in its light and shade, then in its colour.

First of the terminal lines of landscape, or of drawing in outline.

I think the examples of shell outline in your copying series[1] must already have made you feel the exact nature of a pure outline, the difficulty of it, and the value.

But we have now to deal with limits of a more subtle kind.

The outline of any simple solid form, even though it

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and want only a picture of places where they have been happy as like as possible. Here, for instance, is one of the Swiss prints coloured by hand which used to be sold in ancient days to meet the demand of a quieter and less mixed order of travellers than now supports the shops of Interlachen. It is the work of a person wholly without genius, and acquainted only with the rudiments of art, but it is entirely unaffected, painstaking, and in those rudiments of art, practised and skilful. Especially in the distribution of its tones of aerial perspective, and in its quite precise, yet not vulgarly rigid, methods of etching, it is to be highly praised; and by means of these two qualities, and a sufficient, though uninteresting harmony of colour, it gives you, in a very diluted and feeble way indeed, but still with vitality enough to be reflective, a sense of being on the real spot. There is nothing of the deep beauty of the place or of the terror of its rocks, or purity of its light; nevertheless, somehow you feel as if you were there, and do verily get a better idea of the town of Schwytz as it is, than I could give you even by a photograph, or by any other means in my power."

The coloured print of Schwytz is No. 286 in the Educational Series; for other references to it, see Vol. XXI. p. 100.]

[1] [See Nos. 191 *seq.* in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 92).]

may have complex parts, represents an actual limit, accurately to be followed. The outline of a cup, of a shell, or of an animal's limb, has a determinable course, which your pen or pencil line either coincides with or does not. You can say of that line, either it is wrong or right; if right, it is in a measure suggestive, and nobly suggestive of the character of the object. But the greater number of objects in a landscape either have outlines so complex that no

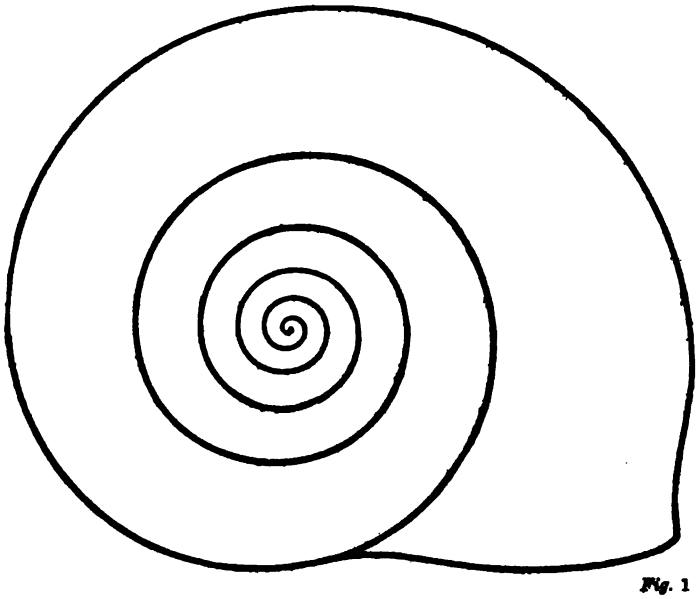

*Fig.* 1

pencil could follow them (as trees in middle distance), or they have no actual outline at all, but a gradated and softened edge; as, for the most part, clouds, foam, and the like. And even in things which have determinate form, the outline of that form is usually quite incapable of expressing their real character.

19. Here is the most ordinary component of a foreground for instance, a pleasantly coloured stone. Any of its pure outlines are not only without beauty, but absolutely powerless to give you any notion of its character, although that character is in itself so interesting, that here

Turner has made a picture of little more than a heap of such stones, with blue water to oppose their colour.[1] In consequence of these difficulties and insufficiencies, most landscape-painters have been tempted to neglect outline altogether, and think only of effects of light or colour on masses more or less obscurely defined. They have thus gradually lost their sense of organic form, their precision of hand, and their respect for limiting law; in a word, for all the safeguards and severe dignities of their art. And landscape-painting has, therefore, more in consequence of this one error than of any other, become weak, frivolous, and justly despised.

20. Now, if any of you have chanced to notice at the end of my *Queen of the Air*,[2] my saying that in landscape Turner must be your only guide, you perhaps have thought I said so because of his great power in melting colours or in massing light and shade. Not so. I have always said he is the only great landscape-painter, and to be your only guide, because he is the only landscape-painter who can draw an outline.

His finished works perhaps appear to you more vague than any other master's: no man loses his outlines more constantly. You will be surprised to know that his frankness in losing depends on his certainty of finding if he chooses; and that, while all other landscape-painters study from Nature in shade or in colour, Turner always sketched with the point.

"Always," of course, is a wide word. In your copying series I have put a sketch by Turner in colour from Nature;[3] some few others of the kind exist, in the National Gallery and elsewhere. But, as a rule, from his boyhood

[1] [Ruskin at this point showed his "St. Gothard: Pass of Faido" (here reproduced, Plate IV., p. 32). For a list of the various engravings of it in *Modern Painters*, see Vol. VI. pp. xxv.–xxvi.; and for other references to it, Vol. XIII. pp. xxiii., xxv., 206, 456, 484. It is the drawing of which Turner used to speak as "that litter of stones" (Vol. XIII. p. 485). Ruskin showed also at the lecture an actual stone which he had brought from the scene of Turner's drawing, and which he used often to show to visitors at Denmark Hill and Brantwood.]

[2] [§ 177, Vol. XIX. p. 420.]

[3] [Probably No. 128 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 86).]

to the last day of his life, he sketched only with the fine pencil point, and always the outline, more if he had time, but at least the outline, of every scene that interested him; and in general, outline so subtle and elaborate as to be inexhaustible in examination and uncopiable for delicacy.

Here is a sketch of an English park scene which represents the average character of a study from Nature by Turner;[1] and here the sketch from Nature of Dunblane Abbey for the *Liber Studiorum*,[2] which shows you what he took from Nature, when he had time only to get what was most precious to him.

21. The first thing, therefore, you have to learn in landscape, is to outline; and therefore we must now know precisely what an outline is, how it ought to be represented; and this it will be right to define in quite general terms applicable to all subjects.

We saw in the fifth Lecture[3] that every visible thing consisted of spaces of colour, terminated either by sharp or gradated limits. Whenever they are sharp, the line of separation, followed by the point of your drawing instrument, is the proper outline of your subject, whether it represents the limits of flat spaces or of solid forms.

22. For instance, here is a drawing by Holbein of a lady in a dark dress, with bars of black velvet round her arm.[4] Her form is seen everywhere defined against the light by a perfectly sharp linear limit which Holbein can accurately draw with his pen; the patches of velvet are also distinguished from the rest of her dress by a linear limit, which he follows with his pen just as decisively. Here, therefore, is your first great law. Wherever you see one space of colour distinguished from another by a sharp limit, you are to draw that limit firmly; and that is your outline.

[1] [No. 127 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 86).]

[2] [The pencil sketch on the spot is No. 145 in the Educational Series; for the plate in *Liber Studiorum*, see below, p. 36 (Plate VI.).]

[3] [*Lectures on Art*, 1870, § 130 (Vol. XX. p. 121).]

[4] [The drawing (which belongs to the Oxford University Galleries) is in the Working Series, Cabinet II., No. 43 (Vol. XXI. p. 304).]

23. Also, observe that as your representing this limit by a dark line is a conventionalism, and just as much a conventionalism when the line is subtle as when it is thick, the great masters accept and declare that conventionalism with perfect frankness, and use bold and decisive outline, if any.

Also, observe, that though, when you are master of your art, you may modify your outline by making it dark in some parts, light in others, and even sometimes thick and sometimes slender, a scientifically accurate outline is perfectly equal throughout; and in your first practice I wish you to use always a pen with a blunt point, which will make no hair stroke under any conditions. So that using black ink and only one movement of the pen, not returning to thicken your line, you shall either have your line there, or not there; and that you may not be able to gradate or change it, in any way or degree whatsoever.

24. Now the first question respecting it is: what place is your thick line to have with respect to the limit which it represents—outside of it, or inside, or over it? Theoretically, it is to be over it; the true limit falling all the way along the centre of your thick line. The contest of Apelles with Protogenes consisted in striking this true limit within each other's lines, more and more finely.[1] And you may always consider your pen line as representing the first incision for sculpture, the true limit being the sharp centre of the incision.

But, practically, when you are outlining a light object defined against a dark one, the line must go outside of it; and when a dark object against a light one, inside of it.

In this drawing of Holbein's, the hand being seen against the light, the outline goes inside the contour of the fingers.

25. Secondly. And this is of great importance. It will

[1] [For other references to this contest and "the line of Apelles," see *Lectures on Art*, § 74 (Vol. XX. p. 81).]

happen constantly that forms are entirely distinct from each other and separated by true limits, which are yet invisible, or nearly so, to the eye. I place, for instance, one of these eggs in front of the other, and probably to most of you the separation in the light is indiscernible. Is it then to be outlined? In practically combining outline with accomplished light and shade there are cases of this kind in which the outline may with advantage, or even must for truth of effect, be omitted. But the facts of the solid form are of so vital importance, and the perfect command of them so necessary to the dignity and intelligibility of the work, that the greatest artists, even for their finished drawings, like to limit every solid form by a fine line, whether its contour be visible to the eye or not.

26. An outline thus perfectly made with absolute decision, and with a wash of one colour above it, is the most masterly of all methods of light and shade study, with limited time, when the forms of the objects to be drawn are clear and unaffected by mist.[1] But without any wash of colour, such an outline is the most valuable of all means for obtaining such memoranda of any scene as may explain to another person, or record for yourself, what is most important in its features.

27. Choose, then, a subject that interests you; and so far as failure of time or materials compels you to finish one part, or express one character, rather than another, of course dwell on the features that interest you most. But beyond this, forget, or even somewhat repress yourself, and make it your first object to give a true idea of the place to other people. You are not to endeavour to express your own feelings about it; if anything, err on the side of concealing them. What is best is not to think of yourself at all, but to state as plainly and simply as you can the whole truth of the thing. What you think unimportant in it may to another person be the most touching part of it:

[1] [Compare *Laws of Fésole*, ch. iv. § 19 (Vol. XV. p. 381).]

what you think beautiful may be in truth commonplace and of small value. Quietly complete each part to the best of your power, endeavouring to maintain a steady and dutiful energy, and the tranquil pleasure of a workman.[1]

[1] [Among the MS. (in Crawley's copy) there are the following passages which may have been read at the end of this lecture:—

"The great constant pleasure of life is in the sense of steady and merited advance in power or knowledge. It is not in what you know, but what you discover; not in what you can do, but in doing every day better. And do not think you can snatch any pleasure out of the hand of God; nor any secret out of the heart of Nature. God will give you as much pleasure as is good for you, if you do what He bids you, quietly; Nature will teach you daily wonderful things out of her heart, if you will love her and listen to her; but if you try to grasp any pleasure hastily or violently, it will become dust in your hand; if you try to find out things impatiently, if you guess at them or debate about them instead of working at them, you will find out nothing really worth knowing.

"Now in our drawings and zoology recollect these two things. You can't have any true pleasure out of art but by advancing firmly in the right way; and you can't understand anything about living creatures unless you love them or hate them, as they deserve, and watch them—it's not the least use calling them fine names. That is not science, but one of the foolishest forms of gabble."

In the first draft of the lecture there is another additional passage here which is of interest as referring to examples which are in the Ruskin Art Collection, or were placed elsewhere by him:—

". . . of a workman; and avoiding alike all excitement or impatience, and all resentment or mortification in failure.

"Now, there are two distinct ways in which you may give another person an idea of the place.

"One is by collecting for him in your drawing as much information as you can, without in the least attempting to deceive him into the sense of his being at the place itself.

"The other way is, without caring how much or how little he is informed, to give him the kind of feeling that he would have had at the place itself—the pleasure and thrill of being there. Here, for instance, is a copy of a sketch by Turner of the town of Naples, in which his only object is to store up all the knowledge he can express with his pencil point of the shapes of the houses and rocks: it is simply a map of the scene giving the solid forms instead of the flat spaces; there is no more effort to make you fancy yourself at the place than if he were making a geometrical survey of an estate.

"Here, on the other hand, is a sketch by Richard Wilson of a scene near Rome, in which the whole effort is to give you this feeling of being actually at the place on a summer afternoon—in which he has entirely succeeded, with a few almost shapeless and dim pencil shadows, and without one articulate form.

"Now, you are always to work with the first of these intentions as the main one; but you are to consider your drawing bad or good, in the degree in which you find afterwards that you have obtained also the second object, and given to the patient statement of facts the charm of reality.

"'The charm of reality,' observe; not in general the absolute aspect of reality. With quite consummate and finished painting, as I told you before [Vol. XX. p. 121], you may reach the very edge of deception; but in all

ordinary work you must be a far way short of that, and yet you must make the spectator feel, somehow, as if he were at the place. This sketch of Wilson's is most visibly a pencil study—you don't mistake it for the scene itself, and yet it will make you warm to look at on a cold day. And I would press upon you most earnestly as a vital sign of goodness in your work, that you have got that sensation of actuality into it.

"I think I can make you feel the character very clearly by two compared examples. Here is a lithographic drawing of the spire and south side of Strasburg Cathedral, which is of very unusual merit as a painstaking effort to render the facts. Nor is it by a person without feeling; on the contrary, it is the only drawing of the spire of Strasburg I ever saw which shows thorough understanding and consciousness of its character, and of the meaning of its architect. The point of view is chosen with the precise aim of getting the maximum light through the traceries in which the marvel is their penetration. The clouds, the aerial distances, and the shadows of the stone work are completed with the most conscientious care—yet somehow you have no sense of being at the place.

"But in this comparatively rough study of Prout's, though it has not half the labour of the other, though it has no sky, no accurate detail, and no attempt at delicacy of texture, somehow or other puts you so thoroughly into Strasburg, that in these railroad days I don't believe if you were really at the place you would feel as strongly that you were there.

"I confess that there is something in this realistic power which I have never been able to analyze, for it exists sometimes in the slightest amateur sketches, as well as in the most accomplished art. But certainly the first condition of it is that the objects shall impress themselves upon the eye in their own order and way, that you shall not be forced to look at anything, whether you like it or not, any more than in the real scene, and that there shall be no sense either of toil or affectation in the work. (Show Abbeville as failure.) Next to this easy harmony of drawing comes the simple diffusion of light, and the feeling of air and sunshine, and these are only to be obtained by a most careful subjection of the colour to chiaroscuro."

The merits of Prout's drawing of Strasburg are also discussed in the *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, No. 10, where the example is reproduced (Vol. XIV., Plate XIV., and pp. 412, 413): see also No. 59 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 80). The sketch of Wilson's, called by Ruskin in a note in the MS. "Arch of Peace," is No. 117 in the Reference Series (Vol. XXI. p. 38): see also below, p. 63. The other example was "Ward's copy of Naples. Outline"; this copy by Mr. William Ward was presented by Ruskin to Whitelands College, Chelsea (see, in a later volume, No. 35 in the *Notes on the Ruskin Cabinet*, where Ruskin says of Turner's sketch that it contains "the utmost possible quantity of information put into the smallest possible space"). The sketch is No. 333 in the National Gallery. The words "Show Abbeville as failure" refer, as a note in the MS. indicates, to Ruskin's drawing of the Market Place, No. 61 in the Reference Series (Vol. XX. p. 399). The drawing is reproduced in Vol. XIX. (Plate VIII. p. 244), so that the reader can judge for himself whether Ruskin's self-criticism is justified.]

# LECTURE II[1]

## LIGHT AND SHADE

28. In my last Lecture[2] I laid before you evidence that the greatness of the master whom I wished you to follow as your only guide in landscape depended primarily on his studying from Nature always with the point; that is to say, in pencil or pen outline. To-day I wish to show you that his pre-eminence depends secondarily on his perfect rendering of form and distance by light and shade, before he admits a thought of colour.

I say "before" however—observe carefully—only with reference to the construction of any given picture, not with reference to the order in which he learnt his mechanical processes. From the beginning, he worked out of doors with the point, but indoors with the brush; and attains perfect skill in washing flat colour long before he attains anything like skill in delineation of form.

29. Here, for instance, is a drawing, when he was twelve or thirteen years old, of Dover Castle and the Dover Coach;[3] in which the future love of mystery is exhibited by his studiously showing the way in which the dust rises about the wheels; and an interest in drunken sailors, which materially affected his marine studies, shown not less in the occupants of the hind seat. But what I want you to observe is that, though the trees, coach, horses, and sailors are drawn as any schoolboy would draw them, the sky is washed in so smoothly that few water-colour painters of our day would lightly accept a challenge to match it.

[1] [Delivered on February 9, 1871.]
[2] [See pp. 25–26.]
[3] [This drawing was No. 1 in the Bond Street Exhibition of Ruskin's collection: see Vol. XIII. p. 413.]

And, therefore, it is, among many other reasons, that I put the brush into your hands from the first, and try you with a wash in lampblack, before you enter my working class.[1] But, as regards the composition of his picture, the drawing is always first with Turner, the colour second.

30. Drawing: that is to say, the expression by gradation of light, either of form or space. Again I thus give you a statement wholly adverse to the vulgar opinion of him. You will find that statement early in the first volume of *Modern Painters*, and repeated now through all my works these twenty-five years, in vain.[2] Nobody will believe that the main virtue of Turner is in his drawing, and therefore at last we have exhibited in the principal place in the Royal Academy Exhibition of Old Masters a picture without one peculiarity of his belonging to it.[3] I say "the main virtue of Turner." Splendid though he be as a colourist, he is not unrivalled in colour; nay, in some qualities of colour he has been far surpassed by the Venetians. But no one has ever touched him in exquisiteness of gradation; and no one in landscape in perfect rendering of organic form.

31. I showed you in this drawing,[4] at last Lecture, how truly he had matched the colour of the iron-stained rocks in the bed of the Ticino; and any of you who care for colour at all cannot but take more or less pleasure in the blues and greens and warm browns opposed throughout. But the essential value of the work is not in these. It is, first, in the expression of enormous scale of mountain and space of air, by gradations of shade in their colours, whatever they may be; and, secondly, in the perfect rounding and cleaving of the masses alike of mountain and stone. I showed you one of the stones themselves, as an example

[1] [See Vol. XX. pp. 131, 132; Vol. XXI. p. xxviii.]

[2] [See, for instance, Vol. III. p. 247, and Vol. XIII. pp. 243 *seq.*]

[3] [This passage ("... , and therefore ... to it") was omitted in the 1897 edition. The reference is to a spurious Turner, No. 40 in the Exhibition of 1871; Ruskin wrote about it to the *Times* (January 24, 1871); the letter is given in Vol. XIII. p. 579 (where in line 11 of the letter there is a misprint of "unable" for "able").]

[4] [Of the Pass of Faido (Plate IV.): see above, § 19, p. 25.]

The St. Gothard

of uninteresting outline. If I were to ask you to paint it, though its colour is pleasant enough, you would still find it uninteresting and coarse compared to that of a flower, or a bird. But if I can engage you in an endeavour to draw its true forms in light and shade, you will most assuredly find it not only interesting, but in some points quite beyond the most subtle skill you can give to it.[1]

32. You have heard me state to you, several times,[2] that all the masters who valued accurate form and modelling found the readiest way of obtaining the facts they required to be firm pen outline, completed by a wash of neutral tint. This method is indeed rarely used by Raphael or Michael Angelo in the drawings they have left us, because their studies are nearly all tentative—experiments in composition, in which the imperfect or careless pen outline suggested all they required, and was capable of easy change without confusing the eye. But the masters who knew precisely before they laid touch on paper what they were going to do—and this may be, observe, either because they are less or greater

[1] [The MS. had here an additional passage which again is of interest as referring to examples in the Ruskin Art Collection:—

"And it is only by such work that you can ever enter into any of the essential qualities of Turner's work. As Reynolds's sketch of a judge is only seen to be good by those who know what a judge is like, so Turner's drawing of a stone or leaf, only by those who know what a stone or leaf is like, and there is not one in a thousand of us who does. You know how many have been the attempts since the Pre-Raphaelite movement to draw leaves and flowers in foreground. Show Mr. MacWhirter's book. Point out that the virtue of it is in *drawing and shading the white or colour*."

Then in the MS. followed § 35. Ruskin, however, in revising, struck out the above passage, and inserted §§ 32–34, adding the following note of matter for extempore delivery:—

"One of my pupils objects to niggle, whereupon I paint a brick for him. Here show brick, and note the action of the moss on it and cleavage. The red and brown and green are nothing. Then possibly diagram of chestnut. Nature of niggle—doing what is not necessary on a small scale or large."

On the subject of "niggling" and true "finish" (*i.e.*, added truth), see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 54). "Reynolds's sketch of a Judge" is No. 32 in the Standard Series (Vol. XXI. p. 24). "Mr. MacWhirter's book" was a sketch-book of foreground studies which Ruskin purchased, in order to place some of the studies in the Oxford Collection (see Educational Series, Nos. 258–261, and Working Series, i., Nos. 34–37). Ruskin's study of a brick is No. 231 in the Educational Series. For the "diagram of chestnut," see Vol. VII. pp. 470, 471 (Figs. 5 and 6).]

[2] [See, for instance, Vol. XX. p. 135.]

than the men who change; less, in merely drawing some natural object without attempt at composition, or greater in knowing absolutely beforehand the composition they intend; it may be, even so, that what they intend, though better known, is not so good:—but at all events, in this anticipating power Tintoret, Holbein and Turner stand, I think, alone as draughtsmen; Tintoret rarely sketching at all, but painting straight at the first blow, while Holbein and Turner sketch indeed, but it is as with a pen of iron and a point of diamond.

33. You will find in your Educational Series * many drawings illustrative of the method; but I have enlarged here[1] the part that is executed with the pen, out of this smaller drawing, that you may see with what fearless strength Holbein delineates even the most delicate folds of the veil on the head, and of the light muslin on the shoulders, giving them delicacy, not by the thinness of his line, but by its exquisite veracity.

The eye will endure with patience, or even linger with pleasure, on any line that is right, however coarse; while the faintest or finest that is wrong will be forcibly destructive. And again and again I have to recommend you to draw always as if you were engraving, and as if the line could not be changed.

34. The method used by Turner in the *Liber Studiorum* is precisely analogous to that of Holbein. The lines of these etchings[2] are to trees, rocks, or buildings, absolutely what these of Holbein are; not suggestions of contingent grace, but determinations of the limits of future form. You will see the explanatory office of such lines by placing this outline over my drawing of the stone, until the lines coincide

* At the Ruskin Drawing School, Oxford.

[1] [No. 39 in the Standard Series (Vol. XXI. p. 25); enlarged from a drawing by Holbein in the University Galleries.]

[2] [Here, no doubt, Ruskin showed some of the etchings for *Liber* plates which are in the Oxford Collection, and illustrated his point further as explained in the text; his drawing of the stone being probably of that in "Blair Athol."]

Near Blair Athol

with the limits of the shadow. You will find that it intensifies and explains the forms which otherwise would have escaped notice, and that a perfectly gradated wash of neutral tint within an outline of this kind is all that is necessary for grammatical statement of forms. It is all that the great colourists need for their studies; they would think it wasted time to go farther; but, if you have no eye for colour, you may go farther in another manner, with enjoyment.[1]

35. Now to go back to Turner.

The *first* great object of the *Liber Studiorum*, for which I requested you in my Sixth Lecture[2] to make constant use of it, is the delineation of solid form by outline and shadow. But a yet more important purpose in each of the designs in that book is the expression of such landscape powers and character as have especial relation to the pleasures and pain of human life—but especially the pain. And it is in this respect that I desired you (§ 172) to be assured, not merely of their superiority, but of their absolute difference in kind from photography, as works of disciplined design.

36. I do not know whether any of you were interested enough in the little note in my catalogue[3] on this view near Blair Athol, to look for the scene itself during your summer rambles. If any did, and found it, I am nearly certain their impression would be only that of an extreme wonder how Turner could have made so little of so beautiful a spot. The projecting rock, when I saw it last in 1857, and I am certain, when Turner saw it, was covered with lichens having as many colours as a painted window. The stream—or rather, powerful and deep Highland river,

[1] [Here the MS. has a note for amplification in delivery :—
"Show my own Glenfinlas and Mont Cenis."
The Glenfinlas (No. 89 in the Reference Series) was accordingly reproduced in the former edition of *Lectures on Landscape;* it has in this edition of the Works already been given (Plate I. in Vol. XII.). Ruskin's "Mont Cenis" (No. 275 in the Educational Series) is reproduced in Vol. XXI. (Plate XXXV.).]

[2] [*Lectures on Art*, 1870, § 170 (Vol. XX. p. 162).]

[3] [In the *Catalogue of Examples* (1870), under 31 F: see now Educational Series, No. 147 (Vol. XXI. p. 88). The plate in *Liber Studiorum* is here reproduced (Plate V.).]

the Tilt — foamed and eddied magnificently through the narrowed channel; and the wild vegetation in the rock crannies was a finished arabesque of living sculpture, of which this study of mine, made on another stream, in Glenfinlas, only a few miles away, will give you a fair idea. Turner has absolutely stripped the rock of its beautiful lichens to bare slate, with one quartz vein running up through it; he has quieted the river into a commonplace stream; he has given, of all the rich vegetation, only one cluster of quite uninteresting leaves and a clump of birches with ragged trunks. Yet, observe, I have told you of it, he has put into one scene the spirit of Scotland.

87. Similarly, those of you who in your long vacations have ever stayed near Dunblane will be, I think, disappointed in no small degree by this study of the abbey, for which I showed you the sketch at last Lecture.[1] You probably know that the oval window in its west end is one of the prettiest pieces of rough thirteenth-century carving in the kingdom; I used it for a chief example in my lectures at Edinburgh;[2] and you know that the lancet windows, in their fine proportion and rugged masonry, would alone form a study of ruined Gothic masonry of exquisite interest.

Yet you find Turner representing the lancet window by a few bare oval lines like the hoop of a barrel; and indicating the rest of the structure by a monotonous and thin piece of outline, of which I was asked by one of yourselves last term, and quite naturally and rightly, how Turner came to draw it so slightly—or, we may even say, so badly.

88. Whenever you find Turner stopping short, or apparently failing in this way, especially when he does the contrary of what any of us would have been nearly sure to do, then is the time to look for your main lesson from him. You recollect those quiet words of the strongest of all

[1] [The *Liber* subject is here reproduced (Plate VI.). For the reference to the sketch, see above, § 20, p. 26.]

[2] [See Vol. XII. p. 31, where an illustration of the window is given.]

Dunblane Abbey

Shakespeare's heroes, when any one else would have had his sword out in an instant:

> "Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them . . .
> Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
> Without a prompter." [1]

Now you must always watch keenly what Turner's *cue* is. You will see his hand go to his hilt fast enough, when it comes. Dunblane Abbey is a pretty piece of building enough, it is true; but the virtue of the whole scene, and meaning, is not in the masonry of it. There is much better masonry and much more wonderful ruin of it elsewhere; Dunblane Abbey—tower and aisles and all—would go under one of the arches of buildings such as there are in the world. Look at what Turner will do when his cue is masonry,—in the Coliseum.[2] What the execution of that drawing is you may judge by looking with a magnifying-glass at the ivy and battlements in this,[3] when, also, his cue is masonry. What then can he mean by not so much as indicating one pebble or joint in the walls of Dunblane?

89. I was sending out the other day, to a friend in America, a chosen group of the *Liber Studiorum* to form a nucleus for an art collection at Boston.[4] And I warned my friend at once to guard his public against the sore disappointment their first sight of these so much celebrated works would be to them. "You will have to make them understand," I wrote to him, "that their first lesson will be in observing not what Turner has done, but what he has not done. These are not finished pictures, but studies; endeavours, that is to say, to get the utmost result possible

[1] [*Othello*, i. 2, 59, 83. For a reference to Othello as the character in Shakespeare most "approximating to the heroic type," see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 56 (Vol. XVIII. p. 112).]

[2] [Here Ruskin probably showed the photograph of the Farnley drawing: see Rudimentary Series, No. 101 (Vol. XXI. p. 196).]

[3] [There is no indication to show what drawing Ruskin here displayed.]

[4] [A passage from the letter to Professor Norton is cited in Vol. XV. p. xxiv. The letter (dated August 8, 1867) is reprinted in a later volume of this edition from *Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. i. p. 166; Ruskin here only gives its effect.]

with the simplest means; they are essentially thoughtful, and have each their fixed purpose, to which everything else is sacrificed; and that purpose is always imaginative—to get at the heart of the thing, not at its outside."

40. Now, it is true, there are beautiful lichens at Blair Athol, and good building at Dunblane; but there are lovely lichens all over the cold regions of the world, and there is far more interesting architecture in other countries than in Scotland. The essential character of Scotland is that of a wild and thinly inhabited rocky country, not sublimely mountainous, but beautiful in low rock and light streamlet everywhere; with sweet copsewood and rudely growing trees. This wild land possesses a subdued and imperfect school of architecture, and has an infinitely tragic feudal, pastoral, and civic history. And in the events of that history a deep tenderness of sentiment is mingled with a cruel and barren rigidity of habitual character, accurately corresponding to the conditions of climate and earth.

41. Now I want you especially to notice, with respect to these things, Turner's introduction of the ugly square tower high up on the left. Your first instinct would be to exclaim, "How unlucky that was there at all! Why, at least, could not Turner have kept it out of sight?" He has quite gratuitously brought it into sight; gratuitously drawn firmly the three lines of stiff drip-stone which mark its squareness and blankness. It is precisely that blank vacancy of decoration, and setting of the meagre angles against wind and war, which he wants to force on your notice, that he may take you thoroughly out of Italy and Greece, and put you wholly into a barbarous and frost-hardened land; that once having its gloom defined he may show you all the more intensely what pastoral purity and innocence of life, and loveliness of nature, are underneath the banks and braes of Doune, and by every brooklet that feeds the Forth and Clyde.

That is the main purpose of these two studies. How it is obtained by various incidents in the drawing of stones,

and trees, and figures, I will show you another time.[1] The chief element in both is the sadness and depth of their effect of subdued though clear light in sky and stream.

42. The sadness of their effect, I repeat. If you remember anything of the Lectures I gave you through last year, you must be gradually getting accustomed to my definition of the Greek school in art, as one essentially Chiaroscurist, as opposed to Gothic colour; Realist, as opposed to Gothic imagination; and Despairing, as opposed to Gothic hope.[2] And you are prepared to recognize it by any one of these three conditions. Only, observe, the chiaroscuro is simply the technical result of the two others: a Greek painter likes light and shade, first, because they enable him to realize form solidly, while colour is flat; and secondly, because light and shade are melancholy, while colour is gay.

So that the defect of colour, and substitution of more or less grey or gloomy effects of rounded gradation, constantly express the two characters: first, [of] Academic or Greek fleshliness and solidity as opposed to Gothic imagination; and secondly, of Greek tragic horror and gloom as opposed to Gothic gladness.

43. In the great French room in the Louvre, if you at all remember the general character of the historical pictures, you will instantly recognize, in thinking generally of them, the rounded fleshly and solid character in the drawing, the grey or greenish and brownish colour, or defect of colour, lurid and moonlight-like, and the gloomy choice of subjects, as the Deluge, the Field of Eylau, the Starvation on the Raft, and the Death of Endymion;[3] always melancholy, and usually horrible.

[1] [There is no further reference to the Blair Athol and Dunblane in these lectures, which, it should be remembered, were supplemented by class teaching.]

[2] [For these three points, see *Lectures on Art*, (1) §§ 137, 138, 147–151; (2) §§ 180–185; and (3) § 149.]

[3] [For Poussin's "Deluge," see Vol. XII. p. 469. "The Field of Eylau," by Baron Gros (1771–1835), is No. 389; probably this is the picture to which, by a slip, Ruskin refers as Vernet's in Vol. XIV. p. 213. "Starvation on the Raft" is the "Wreck of the Medusa," by Géricault, referred to in § 18 of the lecture on "Modern Art" (Vol. XIX. p. 212). "The Sleep of Endymion" (No. 361), by Anne Louis Girodet de Roucy Trioson (1767–1824), was painted in Rome, and much admired at the Paris Salon of 1792.]

The more recent pictures of the painter Gérôme unite all these attributes in a singular degree; above all, the fleshliness and materialism which make his studies of the nude, in my judgment, altogether inadmissible into the rank of the fine arts.[1]

44. Now you observe that I never speak of this Greek school but with a certain dread. And yet I have told you that Turner belongs to it, that all the strongest men in times of developed art belong to it;[2] but then, remember, so do all the basest. The learning of the Academy is indeed a splendid accessory to original power, in Velasquez, in Titian, or in Reynolds; but the whole world of art is full of a base learning of the Academy, which, when fools possess, they become a tenfold plague of fools.

And again, a stern and more or less hopeless melancholy necessarily is undercurrent in the minds of the greatest men of all ages,—of Homer, Aeschylus, Pindar, or Shakespeare. But an earthy, sensual, and weak despondency is the attribute of the lowest mental and bodily disease; and the imbecilities and lassitudes which follow crime, both in nations and individuals, can only find a last stimulus to their own dying sensation in the fascinated contemplation of completer death.

45. Between these—the highest, and these—the basest, you have every variety and combination of strength and of mistake: the mass of foolish persons dividing themselves always between the two oppositely and equally erroneous faiths, that genius may dispense with law, or that law can create genius. Of the two, there is more excuse for, and less danger in the first than in the second mistake. Genius has sometimes done lovely things without knowledge and without discipline. But all the learning of the Academies has never yet drawn so much as one fair face, or ever set two pleasant colours side by side.

[1] [For other references to Gérome, see Vol. XV. p. 497, and Vol. XX. p. 195 *n.*]

[2] [See *Lectures on Art*, § 185 (Vol. XX. p. 174), and *Catalogue of the Standard Series* (Vol. XXI. p. 11).]

46. Now there is one great Northern painter, of whom I have not spoken till now,[1] probably to your surprise, Rubens; whose power is composed of so many elements, and whose character may be illustrated so completely, and with it the various operation of the counter schools, by one of his pictures now open to your study, that I would press you to set aside one of your brightest Easter afternoons for the study of that one picture in the Exhibition of Old Masters,[2] the so-called "Juno and Argus," No. 387.

So-called, I say; for it is not a picture either of Argus or of Juno, but the portrait of a Flemish lady "as Juno" (just as Rubens painted his family picture with his wife "as the Virgin" and himself "as St. George"[3]): and a good anatomical study of a human body as Argus. In the days of Rubens, you must remember, mythology was thought of as a mere empty form of compliment or fable, and the original meaning of it wholly forgotten. Rubens never dreamed that Argus is the night, or that his eyes are stars; but with the absolutely literal and brutal part of his Dutch nature supposes the head of Argus full of real eyes all over, and represents Hebe cutting them out with a bloody knife and putting one into the hand of the goddess, like an unseemly oyster.

That conception of the action, and the loathsome sprawling of the trunk of Argus under the chariot, are the essential contributions of Rubens' own Netherland personality. Then the rest of the treatment he learned from other schools, but adopted with splendid power.

47. First, I think, you ought to be struck by having two large peacocks painted with scarcely any colour in them! They are nearly black, or black-green, peacocks. Now you know that Rubens is always spoken of as a great colourist, *par excellence* a colourist; and would you not have expected

[1] [That is, in the Oxford lectures.]

[2] [The Winter Exhibition of 1871; for references to other pictures in the same exhibition, see pp. 32, 46, 47. The Rubens ("Juno transferring the eyes of Argus to the tail of the peacock") was lent by the Earl of Dudley.]

[3] [At Antwerp: see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 330).]

that—before all things—the first thing he would have seen in a peacock would have been gold and blue? He sees nothing of the kind. A peacock, to him, is essentially a dark bird; serpent-like in the writhing of the neck, cloud-like in the toss and wave of its plumes. He has dashed out the filaments of every feather with magnificent drawing; he has not given you one bright gleam of green or purple in all the two birds.

Well, the reason of that is that Rubens is not *par excellence* a colourist; nay, is not even a good colourist. He is a very second-rate and coarse colourist; and therefore his colour catches the lower public, and gets talked about. But he is *par excellence* a splendid draughtsman of the Greek school; and no one else, except Tintoret, could have drawn with the same ease either the muscles of the dead body or the plumes of the birds.

48. Farther, that he never became a great colourist does not mean that he could not, had he chosen. He was warped from colour by his lower Greek instincts, by his animal delight in coarse and violent forms and scenes—in fighting, in hunting, and in torments of martyrdom and of hell: but he had the higher gift in him, if the flesh had not subdued it. There is one part of this picture which he learned how to do at Venice, the Iris, with the golden hair, in the chariot behind Juno. In her he has put out his full power, under the teaching of Veronese and Titian; and he has all the splendid Northern-Gothic, Reynolds or Gainsborough play of feature with Venetian colour. Scarcely anything more beautiful than that head, or more masterly than the composition of it, with the inlaid pattern of Juno's robe below, exists in the art of any country. *Si sic omnia!*—but I know nothing else equal to it throughout the entire works of Rubens.

49. See, then, how the picture divides itself. In the fleshly baseness, brutality and stupidity of its main conception, is the Dutch part of it; that is Rubens' own. In the noble drawing of the dead body and of the birds you

have the Phidias-Greek part of it, brought down to Rubens through Michael Angelo. In the embroidery of Juno's robe you have the Dædalus-Greek part of it, brought down to Rubens through Veronese. In the head of Iris you have the pure Northern-Gothic part of it, brought down to Rubens through Giorgione and Titian.

50. Now, though — even if we had given ten minutes of digression—the lessons in this picture would have been well worth it, I have not, in taking you to it, gone out of my own way. There is a special point for us to observe in those dark peacocks. If you look at the notes on the Venetian pictures in the end of my *Stones of Venice*, you will find it especially dwelt upon as singular that Tintoret, in his picture of "The Nativity,"[1] has a peacock without any colour in it. And the reason of it is also that Tintoret belongs, with the full half of his mind, as Rubens does, to the Greek school. But the two men reach the same point by opposite paths. Tintoret begins with what Venice taught him, and adopted what Athens could teach: but Rubens begins with Athens, and adopts from Venice. Now if you will look back to my fifth Lecture[2] you will find it said that the colourists can always adopt as much chiaroscuro as suits them, and so become perfect; but the chiaroscurists cannot, on their part, adopt colour, except partially. And accordingly, whenever Tintoret chooses, he can laugh Rubens to scorn in management of light and shade; but Rubens only here and there—as far as I know myself, only this once—touches Tintoret or Giorgione in colour.

51. But now observe farther. The Greek chiaroscuro, I have just told you,[3] is by one body of men pursued academically, as a means of expressing form; by another, tragically, as a mystery of light and shade, corresponding to—and forming part of—the joy and sorrow of life. You

[1] [The Adoration of the Shepherds; noticed in the Venetian Index ("Rocco," 10: see Vol. XI. p. 411).]
[2] [*Lectures on Art*, 1870, § 138 (Vol. XX. p. 127).]
[3] [See above, § 42, p. 39.]

may, of course, find the two purposes mingled: but pure formal chiaroscuro—Marc Antonio's[1] and Leonardo's—is inconsistent with colour, and though it is thoroughly necessary as an exercise, it is only as a correcting and guarding one, never as a basis of art.

52. Let me be sure, now, that you thoroughly understand the relation of formal shade to colour. Here is an egg; here, a green cluster of leaves; here, a bunch of black grapes.[2] In formal chiaroscuro, all these are to be considered as white, and drawn as if they were carved in marble. In this engraving of "Melancholy,"[3] what I meant by telling you it was in formal chiaroscuro was that the ball is white, the leaves are white, the dress is white; you can't tell what colour any of these stand for. On the contrary, to a colourist the first question about everything is its colour. Is this a white thing, a green thing, or a blue thing? down must go my touch of white, green, or dark blue first of all; if afterwards I can make them look round, or like fruit and leaves, it's all very well; but if I can't, blue or green they at least shall be.

53. Now here you have exactly the thing done by the two masters we are speaking of. Here is a copy of Turner's vignette of "Martigny."[4] This is wholly a design of the coloured school. Here is a bit of vine in the foreground with purple grapes; the grapes, so far from being drawn as round, are struck in with angular flat spots; but they are vividly purple spots, their whole vitality and use in the design is in their Tyrian nature. Here, on the contrary, is Dürer's "Flight into Egypt,"[5] with grapes and palm fruit above. Both are white; but both engraved so as to look thoroughly round.

[1] [For Marc Antonio, see Vol. XXI. p. 185, and the references there noted.]

[2] [Here Ruskin probably showed one of his drawings by William Hunt.]

[3] [No. 4 in the Standard Series (Vol. XXI. p. 12): see Plate E in Vol. VII. For the references to it being in "formal chiaroscuro," see *Lectures on Art*, §§ 158, 169 (Vol. XX. pp. 153, 162).]

[4] [By Mr. William Ward. No. 146 in the Rudimentary Series (Vol. XXI. p. 213).]

[5] [Woodcut. No. 71 in the Rudimentary Series (Vol. XXI. p. 188).]

54. All the other great chiaroscurists whom I named to you[1] — Reynolds, Velasquez, and Titian — approached their shadow also on the safe side—from Venice: they always think of colour first. But Turner had to work his way out of the dark Greek school up to Venice; he always thinks of his shadow first; and it held him in some degree fatally to the end. Those pictures which you all laughed at were not what you fancied, mad endeavours for colour; they were agonizing Greek efforts to get light. He could have got colour easily enough if he had rested in that; which I will show you in next lecture.[2] Still, he so nearly made himself a Venetian that, as opposed to the Dutch academical chiaroscurists, he is to be considered a Venetian altogether. And now I will show you, in a very simple subject, the exact opposition of the two schools.

55. Here is a study of swans, from a Dutch book of academical instruction in Rubens' time. It is a good and valuable book in many ways, and you are going to have some copies set you from it.[3] But as a type of academical chiaroscuro it will give you most valuable lessons on the other side—of warning.

Here, then, is the academical Dutchman's notion of a swan. He has laboriously engraved every feather, and has rounded the bird into a ball; and has thought to himself that never swan has been so engraved before. But he has never with his Dutch eyes perceived two points in a swan which are vital to it: first, that it is white; and, secondly, that it is graceful. He has above all things missed the proportion, and necessarily therefore the bend of its neck.

56. Now take the colourist's view of the matter. To him the first main facts about the swan are that it is a white thing with black spots. Turner takes one brush in his right hand, with a little white in it; another in his left hand, with a little lampblack. He takes a piece of brown

[1] [See above, § 44, p. 40.]
[2] [See below, § 45 and the reproductions of the "Dudley" and "Flint."]
[3] [One such example is in the Educational Series, No. 164 (Vol. XXI. p. 89); but the study of swans was not placed in the Oxford Collection.]

paper, works for about two minutes with his white brush, passes the black to his right hand, and works half a minute with that, and, there you are![1]

You would like to be able to draw two swans in two minutes and a half yourselves. Perhaps so, and I can show you how; but it will need twenty years' work all day long. First, in the meantime, you must draw them rightly, if it takes two hours instead of two minutes; and, above all, remember that they are black and white.

57. But farther: you see how intensely Turner felt precisely what the Fleming did not feel — the bend of the neck. Now this is not because Turner is a colourist, as opposed to the Fleming; but because he is a pure and highly trained Greek, as opposed to the Fleming's low Greek. Both, so far as they are aiming at form, are now working in the Greek school of Phidias; but Turner is true Greek, for he is thinking only of the truth about the swan; and De Wit is pseudo-Greek, for he is thinking not of the swan at all, but of his own Dutch self. And so he has ended in making, with his essentially piggish nature, this sleeping swan's neck as nearly as possible like a leg of pork.

That is the result of academical work, in the hands of a vulgar person.

58. And now I will ask you to look carefully at three more pictures in the London Exhibition.

The first, "The Nativity," by Sandro Botticelli.[2] It is an early work by him; but a quite perfect example of what the masters of the pure Greek school did in Florence.

One of the Greek main characters, you know, is to be ἀπρόσωπος, faceless.[3] If you look first at the faces in this

[1] [Plate VII. is a reproduction from a copy by Ruskin of Turner's study of swans in the National Gallery (No. 609); for another reference to the study, see Vol. XIII. p. 275.]

[2] [Now in the National Gallery, No. 1034. It is, however, one of the latest works of Botticelli (who died in 1510), being dated 1500. For another reference to it, see the Introduction (above, p. xxx.).]

[3] [See *Aratra Pentelici*, § 183, and Appendix vi. (Vol. XX. pp. 333, 408); and compare *Queen of the Air*, § 167 (Vol. XIX. p. 412). See also below, *Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, § 21 (p. 94).]

J M W Turner, R A

Swans

W L Colls

picture you will find them ugly—often without expression, always ill or carelessly drawn. The entire purpose of the picture is a mystic symbolism by motion and chiaroscuro. By motion, first. There is a dome of burning clouds in the upper heaven. Twelve angels half float, half dance, in a circle, round the lower vault of it. All their drapery is drifted so as to make you feel the whirlwind of their motion. They are seen by gleams of silvery or fiery light, relieved against an equally lighted blue of inimitable depth and loveliness. It is impossible for you ever to see a more noble work of passionate Greek chiaroscuro—rejoicing in light.

59. From this I should like you to go instantly to Rembrandt's "Portrait of a Burgomaster" (No. 77 in the Exhibition of Old Masters).[1] That is ignobly passionate chiaroscuro, rejoicing in darkness rather than light.

You cannot see a finer work by Rembrandt. It has all his power of rendering character, and the portrait is celebrated through the world. But it is entirely second-rate work. The character in the face is only striking to persons who like candle-light effects better than sunshine; any head by Titian has twice the character, and seen by daylight instead of gas. The rest of the picture is as false in light and shade as it is pretentious, made up chiefly of gleaming buttons, in places where no light could possibly reach them; and of an embossed belt on the shoulder, which people think finely painted because it is all over lumps of colour, not one of which was necessary. That embossed execution of Rembrandt's is just as much ignorant work as the embossed projecting jewels of Carlo Crivelli; a real painter never loads (see the Velasquez, No. 415 in the same exhibition[2]).

60. Finally, from the Rembrandt go to the little Cima (No. 98), "St. Mark."[3] Thus you have the Sandro Botticelli, of the noble Greek school in Florence; the Rembrandt,

[1] [In the Earl of Warwick's collection.]
[2] ["Portrait of a Lady," then in the Earl of Dudley's collection.]
[3] [In Lady Eastlake's collection.]

of the debased Greek school in Holland; and the Cima, of the pure colour school of Venice.

The Cima differs from the Rembrandt, by being lovely; from the Botticelli, by being simple and calm. The painter does not desire the excitement of rapid movement, nor even the passion of beautiful light. But he hates darkness as he does death; and falsehood more than either. He has painted a noble human creature simply in clear daylight; not in rapture, nor yet in agony. He is neither dressed in a rainbow, nor bedraggled with blood. You are neither to be alarmed nor entertained by anything that is likely to happen to him. You are not to be improved by the piety of his expression, nor disgusted by its truculence. But there is more true mastery of light and shade, if your eye is subtle enough to see it, in the hollows and angles of the architecture and folds of the dress, than in all the etchings of Rembrandt put together. The unexciting colour will not at first delight you; but its charm will never fail; and from all the works of variously strained and obtrusive power with which it is surrounded, you will find that you never return to it but with a sense of relief and of peace, which can only be given you by the tender skill which is wholly without pretence, without pride, and without error.

# LECTURE III[1]

## COLOUR

61. The distinctions between schools of art which I have so often asked you to observe are, you must be aware, founded only on the excess of certain qualities in one group of painters over another, or the difference in their tendencies; and not in the absolute possession by one group, and absence in the rest, of any given skill. But this impossibility of drawing trenchant lines of parting need never interfere with the distinctness of our conception of the opponent principles which balance each other in great minds, or paralyse each other in weak ones; and I cannot too often urge you to keep clearly separate in your thoughts the school which I have called[2] "of Crystal," because its distinctive virtue is seen unaided in the sharp separations and prismatic harmonies of painted glass, and the other, the "School of Clay," because its distinctive virtue is seen in the qualities of any fine work in uncoloured terra-cotta, and in every drawing which represents them.

62. You know I sometimes speak of these generally as the Gothic and Greek schools, sometimes as the colourist and chiaroscurist.[3] All these oppositions are liable to infinite qualification and gradation, as between species of animals; and you must not be troubled, therefore, if sometimes momentary contradictions seem to arise in examining special points. Nay, the modes of opposition in the greatest men are inlaid and complex; difficult to explain, though in themselves clear. Thus you know in your study of sculpture we saw that the essential aim of the Greek art was tranquil

[1] [Delivered on February 23, 1871.]
[2] [*Lectures on Art*, 1870, § 185 (Vol. XX. p. 174).]
[3] [See *Lectures on Art*, § 158 (*ibid.*, p. 153).]

action;[1] the chief aim of Gothic art was passionate rest, a peace, an eternity of intense sentiment. As I go into detail, I shall continually therefore have to oppose Gothic passion, ἔκστασις, to Greek temperance; yet Gothic rigidity, στάσις, to Greek action and ἐλευθερία.[2] You see how doubly, how intimately, opposed the ideas are; yet how difficult to explain without apparent contradiction.

63. Now, to-day, I must guard you carefully against a misapprehension of this kind. I have told you that the Greeks as Greeks made real and material what was before indefinite;[3] they turned the clouds and the lightning of Mount Ithome into the human flesh and eagle upon the extended arm of the Messenian Zeus. And yet, being in all things set upon absolute veracity and realization, they perceive as they work and think forward that to see in all things truly is to see in all things dimly and through hiding of cloud and fire.

So that the schools of Crystal, visionary, passionate, and fantastic in purpose, are, in method, trenchantly formal and clear; and the schools of Clay, absolutely realistic, temperate, and simple in purpose, are, in method, mysterious and soft; sometimes licentious, sometimes terrific, and always obscure.

64. Look once more at this Greek dancing-girl[4] which is from a terra-cotta, and therefore intensely of the school of Clay; look at her beside this Madonna of Filippo Lippi's:[5] Greek motion against Gothic absolute quietness; Greek indifference—dancing careless—against Gothic passion, the mother's—what word can I use except phrensy of love; Greek fleshliness against hungry wasting of the self-forgetful body; Greek softness of diffused shadow and

[1] [See *Aratra Pentelici*, §§ 191, 192 (Vol. XX. p. 339).]

[2] [Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 199 (Vol. XXIII. p. 117), where "Greek Stasy" is contrasted with "Gothic Ec-stasy." For the misreading of this passage in the previous edition, see above, Bibliographical Note, p. 7.]

[3] [*Ibid.*, p. 348; and for the coin of Messene, see in the same volume Plate XXI. and pp. 343–345.]

[4] [For the former reference, see Vol. XX. p. 408. Plate VIII. here; the studies are in the Rudimentary Series, No. 52 (Vol. XXI. p. 180).]

[5] [The edition of 1897 here gave a reproduction of Lippi's "Madonna and Child" (No. 1307 in the Uffizi). It is now reserved for reproduction in *Fors Clavigera* among the other "Lesson Photographs" there described.]

Studies of Greek Terra-cotta, on two sides.

ductile curve, against Gothic sharpness of crystalline colour and acuteness of angle, and Greek simplicity and human veracity against Gothic redundance of irrational vision.

65. And now I may safely, I think, go into our work of to-day without confusing you, except only in this. You will find me continually speaking of four men—Titian, Holbein, Turner, and Tintoret—in almost the same terms. They unite every quality; and sometimes you will find me referring to them as colourists, sometimes as chiaroscurists. Only remember this, that Holbein and Turner are Greek chiaroscurists, nearly perfect by adopted colour; Titian and Tintoret are essentially Gothic colourists, quite perfect by adopted chiaroscuro.[1]

66. I used the word "prismatic" just now of the schools of Crystal, as being iridescent. By being studious of colour they are studious of division; and while the chiaroscurist devotes himself to the representation of degrees of force in one thing—unseparated light, the colourists have for their function the attainment of beauty by arrangement of the divisions of light. And therefore, primarily, they must be able to divide; so that elementary exercises in colour must be directed, like first exercises in music, to the clear separation of notes; and the final perfections of colour are those in which, of innumerable notes or hues, every one has a distinct office, and can be fastened on by the eye, and approved, as fulfilling it.

67. I do not doubt that it has often been matter of wonder among any of you who had faith in my judgment, why I gave to the University, as characteristic of Turner's work, the simple and at first unattractive drawings of the Loire series.[2] My first and principal reason was that they enforced beyond all resistance, on any student who might attempt to copy them, this method of laying portions of distinct hue side by side. Some of the touches, indeed, when the tint has been mixed with much water, have been

[1] [See above, § 50, p. 43.]
[2] [In 1861. See Vol. XIII. pp. 559, 560; and Vol. XVII. pp. xxxvi., xxxvii.]

laid in little drops or ponds, so that the pigment might crystallize hard at the edge. And one of the chief delights which any one who really enjoys painting finds in that art as distinct from sculpture is in this exquisite inlaying or joiner's work of it, the fitting of edge to edge with a manual skill precisely correspondent to the close application of crowded notes without the least slur, in fine harp or piano playing.

68. In many of the finest works of colour on a large scale there is even some admission of the quality given to a painted window by the dark lead bars between the pieces of glass. Both Tintoret and Veronese, when they paint on dark grounds, continually stop short with their tints just before they touch others, leaving the dark ground showing between in a narrow bar. In the Paul Veronese in the National Gallery,[1] you will every here and there find pieces of outline, like this of Holbein's;[2] which you would suppose were drawn, as that is, with a brown pencil. But no! Look close, and you will find they are the dark ground, *left* between two tints brought close to each other without touching.

69. It follows also from this law of construction that any master who can colour can always do any pane of his window that he likes, separately from the rest. Thus, you see, here is one of Sir Joshua's first sittings:[3] the head is very nearly done with the first colour; a piece of background is put in round it: his sitter has had a pretty silver brooch on, which Reynolds, having done as much as he chose to the face for that time, paints quietly in its place below, leaving the dress between to be fitted in afterwards; and he puts a little patch of the yellow gown that is to be, at the side. And it follows also from this law of construction that there must never be any hesitation or

[1] [No. 294: "The Family of Darius." For similar references to technical points in this picture, see Vol. VII. p. 246; Vol. XIII. p. 244 *n.*; and Vol. XIV. p. 187.]

[2] [The example here shown was probably No. 235 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 96).]

[3] [Plate IX.; from the sketch at Brantwood.]

The Lady with the Brooch

repentance in the direction of your lines of limit. So that not only in the beautiful dexterity of the joiner's work, but in the necessity of cutting out each piece of colour at once and for ever (for, though you can correct an erroneous junction of black and white because the grey between has the nature of either, you cannot correct an erroneous junction of red and green which make a neutral between them, if they overlap, that is neither red nor green): thus the practice of colour educates at once in neatness of hand and firmness and distinctness of will; so that, as I wrote long ago in the third volume of *Modern Painters*, you are always safe if you hold the hand of a colourist.[1]

70. I have brought you a little sketch to-day from the foreground of a Venetian picture,[2] in which there is a bit that will show you this precision of method. It is the head of a parrot with a little flower in his beak from a picture of Carpaccio's, one of his series of the Life of St. George. I could not get the curves of the leaves, and they are patched and spoiled; but the parrot's head, however badly done, is put down with no more touches than the Venetian gave it, and it will show you exactly his method. First, a thin, warm ground had been laid over the whole canvas, which Carpaccio wanted as an undercurrent through all the colour, just as there is an undercurrent of grey in the Loire drawings. Then on this he strikes his parrot in vermilion, almost flat colour; rounding a little only with a glaze of lake; but attending mainly to get the character of the bird by the pure outline of its form, as if it were cut out of a piece of ruby glass.

Then he comes to the beak of it. The brown ground beneath is left, for the most part; one touch of black is put for the hollow; two delicate lines of dark grey define the outer curve; and one little quivering touch of white

[1] [Really in the *fourth* volume (pt. v. ch. iii. § 24, last words), Vol. VI. p. 72.]

[2] [No. 161 in the Educational Series: see Vol. XXI. p. 135 for other references to it. The sketch is now given in *St. Mark's Rest.*]

draws the inner edge of the mandible. There are just four touches—fine as the finest penmanship—to do that beak; and yet you will find that in the peculiar parroquettish mumbling and nibbling action of it, and all the character in which this nibbling beak differs from the tearing beak of the eagle, it is impossible to go farther or be more precise. And this is only an incident, remember, in a large picture.

71. Let me notice, in passing, the infinite absurdity of ever hanging Venetian pictures above the line of sight. There are very few persons in the room who will be able to see the drawing of this bird's beak without a magnifying glass; yet it is ten to one that in any modern gallery such a picture would be hung thirty feet from the ground.

Here, again, is a little bit to show Carpaccio's execution.[1] It is his signature: only a little wall-lizard, holding the paper in its mouth, perfect; yet so small that you can scarcely see its feet, and that I could not, with my finest-pointed brush, copy their stealthy action.

72. And now, I think, the members of my class will more readily pardon the intensely irksome work I put them to, with the compasses and the ruler.[2] Measurement and precision are, with me, before all things; just because, though myself trained wholly in the chiaroscuro schools, I know the value of colour; and I want you to begin with colour in the very outset, and to see everything as children would see it. For, believe me, the final philosophy of art can only ratify their opinion that the beauty of a cock-robin is to be red, and of a grass-plot to be green; and the best skill of art is in instantly seizing on the manifold deliciousness of light, which you can only seize by precision of instantaneous touch. Of course, I cannot do so myself;

[1] [Now in Frame No. 171 in the Educational Series. For another note on it, see his *Catalogue of the Educational Series, 1878*, No. 189 (Vol. XXI. p. 152). Ruskin's sketch is now reproduced in *St. Mark's Rest*, § 183.]

[2] [See *Lectures on Art*, § 142 (Vol. XX. p. 133); and *Elements of Drawing*, §§ 18, 47 (Vol. XV. pp. 38 *n.*, 51); and compare the geometrical exercises in *Laws of Fésole* (Vol. XV.), and the "Instructions in Elementary Drawing" (Vol. XXI.).]

yet in these sketches of mine, made for the sake of colour, there is enough to show you the nature and the value of the method. They are two pieces of study of the colour of marble architecture, the tints literally "edified," and laid edge to edge as simply on the paper as the stones are on the walls.[1]

73. But please note in them one thing especially. The testing rule I gave for good colour in the *Elements of Drawing*,[2] is that you make the white precious and the black conspicuous. Now you will see in these studies that the moment the white is enclosed properly, and harmonized with the other hues, it becomes somehow more precious and pearly than the white paper; and that I am not afraid to leave a whole field of untreated white paper all round it, being sure that even the little diamonds in the round window will tell as jewels, if they are gradated justly.

Again, there is not a touch of black in any shadow, however deep, of these two studies; so that, if I chose to put a piece of black near them, it would be conspicuous with a vengeance.

But in this vignette, copied from Turner,[3] you have the two principles brought out perfectly. You have the white of foaming water, of buildings and clouds, brought out brilliantly from a white ground; and though part of the subject is in deep shadow the eye at once catches the one black point admitted in front.

74. Well, the first reason that I gave you these Loire drawings was this of their infallible decision; the second was their extreme modesty in colour. They are, beyond all other works that I know existing, dependent for their effect on low, subdued tones; their favourite choice in time of day being either dawn or twilight, and even their

[1] [The examples referred to are probably No. 68 in the Reference Series and No. 93 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. pp. 32, 83).]

[2] [See Vol. XV. p. 164.]

[3] [No doubt the "St. Maurice" (engraved in Rogers's *Italy*, p. 9); No. 205 in the National Gallery. A copy by Mr. William Ward is No. 145 in the Rudimentary Series at Oxford (Vol. XXI. p. 212).]

brightest sunsets produced chiefly out of grey paper. This last, the loveliest of all,[1] gives the warmth of a summer twilight with a tinge of colour on the grey paper so slight that it may be a question with some of you whether any is there. And I must beg you to observe, and receive as a rule without any exception, that whether colour be gay or sad, the value of it depends never on violence, but always on subtlety.[2] It may be that a great colourist will use his utmost force of colour, as a singer his full power of voice; but, loud or low, the virtue is in both cases always in refinement, never in loudness. The west window of Chartres is bedropped with crimson deeper than blood;[3] but it is as soft as it is deep, and as quiet as the light of dawn.

75. I say, "whether colour be gay or sad." It must, remember, be one or the other. You know I told you that the pure Gothic school of colour was entirely cheerful;[4] that, as applied to landscape, it assumes that all nature is lovely, and may be clearly seen; that destruction and decay are accidents of our present state, never to be thought of seriously, and, above all things, never to be painted; but that whatever is orderly, healthy, radiant, fruitful and beautiful, is to be loved with all our hearts and painted with all our skill.

76. I told you also[5] that no complete system of art for either natural history or landscape could be formed on this system; that the wrath of a wild beast, and the tossing of a mountain torrent are equally impossible to a painter of the purist school; that in higher fields of thought increasing knowledge means increasing sorrow, and every art which has complete sympathy with humanity must be chastened by the sight and oppressed by the memory of pain. But there is no reason why your system of study should be a complete one, if it be right and profitable though incomplete.

[1] [No. 3 in the Standard Series: see Vol. XXI. p. 12.]
[2] [Compare Vol. IV. p. 140, and Vol. XVI. p. 419.]
[3] [See Vol. XII. p. 504.]
[4] [See *Lectures on Art*, § 149 (Vol. XX. p. 140).]
[5] [See, again, *Lectures on Art*, § 187 (Vol. XX. p. 175).]

If you can find it in your hearts to follow out only the Gothic thoughts of landscape, I deeply wish you would, and for many reasons.

77. First, it has never yet received due development; for at the moment when artistic skill and knowledge of effect became sufficient to complete its purposes, the Reformation destroyed the faith in which they might have been accomplished; for to the whole body of powerful draughtsmen the Reformation meant the Greek school and the shadow of death. So that of exquisitely developed Gothic landscape you may count the examples on the fingers of your hand: Van Eyck's "Adoration of the Lamb" at Bruges;[1] another little Van Eyck in the Louvre; the John Bellini lately presented to the National Gallery;[2] another John Bellini in Rome: and the "St. George" of Carpaccio at Venice, are all that I can name myself of great works.[3] But there exist some exquisite, though feebler, designs in missal painting; of which, in England, the landscape and flowers in the Psalter of Henry the Sixth[4] will serve you for a sufficient type; the landscape in the Grimani missal at Venice[5] being monumentally typical and perfect.

78. Now for your own practice in this, having first acquired the skill of exquisite delineation and laying of

[1] [This work, the central portion of a great altar-piece by the brothers Hubert and Jan van Eyck, is not at Bruges (though it was painted there), but in the Vydt family chapel in St. Bavon in Ghent. For "the little Van Eyck in the Louvre"—the "Virgin with Donor"—see Vol. XII. p. 468.]

[2] [No. 812: "Landscape, with the Death of St. Peter Martyr." For other references to the picture (which was presented in 1870 by Lady Eastlake), see above, § 11, and below, § 94 (pp. 19, 66), and *The Relation of Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, § 13 (below, p. 85). It is not clear what "Bellini in Rome" Ruskin refers to: for pictures by him now or formerly in Rome, see Crowe and Cavalcaselle's *History of Painting in North Italy*, vol. i. p. 193 *n*. For Carpaccio's "St. George," see *St. Mark's Rest*, § 168.]

[3] [In the first draft of the lectures there is another passage on Carpaccio:—

> "Carpaccio belongs to the Gothic school, and one of his greatest landscapes in Venice has the foreground indeed strewed with corpses; but over all is glorious victory of St. George over the dragon; and over every thought of death he is himself so much *Victor* Carpaccio that he makes his principal series of pictures of the scenes which are to end in the martyrdom of Eleven Thousand Virgins."]

[4] [In the British Museum: see the letter given in Vol. XIX. p. 230.]

[5] [The famous early Flemish *breviary* in the Bibliotheca Marciana.]

pure colour, day by day you must draw some lovely natural form or flower or animal without obscurity — as in missal painting; choosing for study, in natural scenes, only what is beautiful and strong in life.

79. I fully anticipated, at the beginning of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, that they would have carried forward this method of work; but they broke themselves to pieces by pursuing dramatic sensation instead of beauty. So that to this day all the loveliest things in the world remain unpainted; and although we have occasionally spasmodic efforts and fits of enthusiasm, and green meadows and apple-blossom to spare,[1] it yet remains a fact that not in all this England, and still less in France, have you a painter who has been able nobly to paint so much as a hedge of wild roses or a forest glade full of anemones or wood-sorrel.

80. One reason of this has been the idea that such work was easy, on the part of the young men who attempted it, and the total vulgarity and want of education in the great body of abler artists, rendering them insensitive to qualities of fine delineation; the universal law for them being that they can draw a pig, but not a Venus.[2] For instance, two landscape-painters of much reputation in England, and one of them in France also—David Cox and John Constable,[3] represent a form of blunt and untrained faculty which in being very frank and simple, apparently powerful, and needing no thought, intelligence or trouble whatever to observe, and being wholly disorderly, slovenly and licentious, and therein meeting with instant sympathy from the disorderly public mind now resentful of every trammel and ignorant of every law—these two men, I say, represent in their intensity the qualities adverse to all accurate science or skill in landscape art; their work being the mere blundering of clever peasants, and deserving no name whatever in any

[1] [Compare Vol. XIV. p. xxiv. and *n.*]

[2] [For this phrase, see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 101 (below, p. 362).]

[3] [For summaries of references to these painters, see Vol. III. p. 46 *n.* (Cox), and Vol. III. p. 45 *n.* (Constable). For a reference to Constable's influence upon the French school, see Vol. XVI. p. 415 and *n.*]

school of true practice, but consummately mischievous—first, in its easy satisfaction of the painter's own self-complacencies, and then in the pretence of ability which blinds the public to all the virtue of patience and to all the difficulty of precision. There is more real relation to the great schools of art, more fellowship with Bellini and Titian, in the humblest painter of letters on village signboards than in men like these.

Do not, therefore, think that the Gothic school is an easy one. You might more easily fill a house with pictures like Constable's from garret to cellar, than imitate one cluster of leaves by Van Eyck or Giotto; and among all the efforts that have been made to paint our common wild-flowers, I have only once—and that in this very year, just in time to show it to you—seen the thing done rightly.[1]

81. But now observe: These flowers, beautiful as they are, are not of the Gothic school. The law of that school is that everything shall be seen clearly, or at least, only in such mist or faintness as shall be delightful; and I have no doubt that the best introduction to it would be the elementary practice of painting every study on a golden ground. This at once compels you to understand that the work is to be imaginative and decorative; that it represents beautiful things in the clearest way, but not under existing conditions; and that, in fact, you are producing jeweller's work, rather than pictures. Then the qualities of grace in design become paramount to every other; and you may afterwards substitute clear sky for the golden background without danger of loss or sacrifice of system: clear sky of golden light, or deep and full blue, for the full blue of Titian is just as much a piece of conventional enamelled background as if it were a plate of gold; that depth of blue in relation to foreground objects being wholly impossible.

[1] [Ruskin may here have shown] a study of primroses by Mr. A. Macdonald, which he greatly admired. For some time it was exhibited in the Ruskin Drawing School, but it was afterwards acquired by the late Mr. Talbot, of Barmouth. Or he may have referred to Mr. MacWhirter's studies (see above, p. 33 *n.*).]

82. There is another immense advantage in this Byzantine and Gothic abstraction of decisive form, when it is joined with a faithful desire of whatever truth can be expressed on narrow conditions. It makes us observe the vital points in which character consists, and educates the eye and mind in the habit of fastening and limiting themselves to essentials. In complete drawing, one is continually liable to be led aside from the main points by picturesque accidents of light and shade; in Gothic drawing you must get the character, if at all, by a keenness of analysis which must be in constant exercise.

88. And here I must beg of you very earnestly, once for all, to clear your minds of any misapprehension of the nature of Gothic art, as if it implied error and weakness, instead of severity. That a style is restrained or severe does not mean that it is also erroneous. Much mischief has been done—endless misapprehension induced in this matter—by the blundering religious painters of Germany, who have become examples of the opposite error from our English painters of the Constable group. Our uneducated men work too bluntly to be ever in the right; but the Germans draw finely and resolutely wrong. Here is a "Riposo" of Overbeck's[1] for instance, which the painter imagined to be elevated in style because he had drawn it without light and shade, and with absolute decision: and so far, indeed, it is Gothic enough; but it is separated everlastingly from Gothic and from all other living work, because the painter was too vain to look at anything he had to paint, and drew every mass of his drapery in lines that were as impossible as they were stiff, and stretched out the limbs of his Madonna in actions as unlikely as they are uncomfortable.

In all early Gothic art, indeed, you will find failure of this kind, especially distortion and rigidity, which are in

[1] [This example was not placed in the Ruskin Art Collection. For references to Overbeck, see Vol. V. p. 50, and Vol. XV. p. 157.]

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many respects painfully to be compared with the splendid repose of classic art. But the distortion is not Gothic; the intensity, the abstraction, the force of character are, and the beauty of colour.

84. Here is a very imperfect, but illustrative border of flowers and animals on a golden ground.[1] The large letter contains, indeed, entirely feeble and ill-drawn figures: that is, merely childish and failing work of an inferior hand; it is not characteristic of Gothic, or any other school. But this peacock, being drawn with intense delight in blue, on gold, and getting character of peacock in the general sharp outline, instead of—as Rubens' peacocks[2]—in black shadow, is distinctively Gothic of fine style.

85. I wish you therefore to begin your study of natural history and landscape by discerning the simple outlines and the pleasant colours of things; and to rest in them as long as you can. But, observe, you can only do this on one condition—that of striving also to create, in reality, the beauty which you seek in imagination. It will be wholly impossible for you to retain the tranquillity of temper and felicity of faith necessary for noble purist painting, unless you are actively engaged in promoting the felicity and peace of practical life. None of this bright Gothic art was ever done but either by faith in the attainableness of felicity in heaven, or under conditions of real order and delicate loveliness on the earth.

86. As long as I can possibly keep you among them, there you shall stay—among the almond and apple blossom.[3] But if you go on into the veracities of the school of Clay, you will find there is something at the roots of almond and apple trees, which is—this—and that.[4] You must look

[1] [Here Ruskin showed no doubt a page from one of his illuminated MSS.]
[2] [See above, § 47, p. 41.]
[3] [Compare Vol. XIV. pp. xxiv., 164.]
[4] [Ruskin here showed (1) the copy of Turner's dragon of the Hesperides, which is No. 156 in the Reference Series (Vol. XXI. p. 42); the plate from *Modern Painters* was included in the 1897 edition of these *Lectures*; it is Plate 78 of Vol. VII. in this edition; (2) Michael Angelo's study of a dragon, which is in the University

at him in the face—fight him—conquer him with what scathe you may: you need not think to keep out of the way of him. There is Turner's Dragon; there is Michael Angelo's; there, a very little one of Carpaccio's. Every soul of them had to understand the creature, and very earnestly.

87. Not that Michael Angelo understands his dragon as the others do. He was not enough a colourist either to catch the points of the creature's aspect, or to feel the same hatred of them; but I confess myself always amazed in looking at Michael Angelo's work here or elsewhere, at his total carelessness of anatomical character except only in the human body. Mr. Robinson says of this drawing that it is "a finished bistre pen drawing of a couchant dragon, carefully shaded with spirited cross hatching, the forms modelled with admirable truthfulness and sculpturesque relief. The monster is huddled together, its tail folded betwixt its legs, and curled round its long snake-like neck." Well, it[1] is very easy to round a dragon's neck, if the only idea you have of it is that it is virtually no more than a coiled sausage; and, besides, anybody can round anything if you have full scale from white high light to black shadow.

88. But look here at Carpaccio, even in my copy. The colourist says, "First of all, as my delicious parroquet was ruby, so this nasty viper shall be black"; and then is the question, "Can I round him off, even though he is black, and make him slimy, and yet springy, and close down—clotted like a pool of black blood on the earth—all the same?" Look at him beside Michael Angelo's, and then

Galleries (No. 13 in J. C. Robinson's *Critical Account of the Drawings . . . in the University Galleries, Oxford*); and (3) the copy of Carpaccio's viper by Ruskin, which was at one time No. 171 in the Educational Series, but was afterwards removed.]

[1] [The edition of 1897 omitted the citation from Robinson, reading ". . . in the human body. It is very easy . . ." The MS. has "Mr. Robinson says of this drawing that— Well, it is . . ." The passage which Ruskin read from the book (p. 14) is here inserted.]

J M W Turner

McLagan & Cumming, Edinr

Flint Castle.

tell me the Venetians can't draw! And also, Carpaccio does it with a touch, with one sweep of his brush; three minutes at the most allowed for all the beast; while Michael Angelo has been haggling at this dragon's neck for an hour.

89. Then note also in Turner's that clinging to the earth—the specialty of him—*il gran nemico*,[1] "the great enemy," Plutus. His claws are like the Clefts of the Rock; his shoulders like its pinnacles; his belly deep into its every fissure—glued down—loaded down; his bat's wings cannot lift him, they are rudimentary wings only.

90. Before I tell you what he means himself, you must know what all this smoke about him means.

Nothing will be more precious to you, I think, in the practical study of art, than the conviction, which will force itself on you more and more every hour, of the way all things are bound together, little and great, in spirit and in matter. So that if you get once the right clue to any group of them, it will grasp the simplest, yet reach to the highest truths. You know I have just been telling you[2] how this school of materialism and clay involved itself at last in cloud and fire. Now, down to the least detail of method and subject, that will hold.

91. Here is a perfect type, though not a complex one, of Gothic landscape; the background gold, the trees drawn leaf by leaf, and full green in colour—no effect of light.[3] Here is an equally typical Greek-school landscape, by Wilson[4]—lost wholly in golden mist; the trees so slightly drawn that you don't know if they are trees or towers, and no care for colour whatever; perfectly deceptive and marvellous effect of sunshine through the mist—"Apollo and

[1] [*Inferno*, vi., last line; compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 88 (Vol. XVII. p. 210).]

[2] [See above, § 63 (p. 50), where the "schools of clay" are said to be "sometimes terrific, always obscure."]

[3] [There is nothing in the MS. to indicate what the example was which Ruskin here exhibited.]

[4] [The Wilson was probably No. 117 in the Reference Series (Vol. XXI. p. 38).]

the Python."[1] Now here is Raphael,[2] exactly between the two—trees still drawn leaf by leaf, wholly formal; but beautiful mist coming gradually into the distance. Well, then, last, here is Turner's; Greek-school of the highest class; and you define his art, absolutely, as first the displaying intensely, and with the sternest intellect, of natural form as it is, and then the envelopment of it with cloud and fire. Only, there are two sorts of cloud and fire. He knows them both. There's one, and there's another—the "Dudley" and the "Flint."[3] That's what the cloud and flame of the dragon mean: now, let me show you what the dragon means himself.

92. I go back to another perfect landscape of the living Gothic school. It is only a pencil outline, by Edward Burne-Jones, in illustration of the story of Psyche; it is the introduction of Psyche, after all her troubles, into heaven.[4]

Now in this of Burne-Jones, the landscape is clearly full of light everywhere, colour or glass light: that is, the outline is prepared for modification of colour only. Every plant in the grass is set formally, grows perfectly, and may be realized completely. Exquisite order, and universal, with eternal, life and light, this is the faith and effort of the schools of Crystal; and you may describe and complete their work quite literally by taking any verses of Chaucer in his tender mood, and observing how he insists on the

[1] [Apollo and the Python being the figure under which Ruskin describes the conquest of Sunshine over Mist: see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 411); and compare below, p. 204.]

[2] [Here Ruskin showed his study from Raphael's "Madonna of the Tribune" (No. 269 in the Educational Series: see Vol. XXI. p. 144), which was engraved in *Modern Painters*. The plate was given in the 1897 edition of *Lectures on Landscape:* see for it, in this edition, Vol. V. p. 394.]

[3] [Plates X. and XI., reproduced from Mr. Arthur Severn's copies of Turner's Drawings. Both drawings were in Ruskin's collection: see Vol. XIII. pp. 435 (Dudley), 422 (Flint). Ruskin there describes in the Flint the lovely "play of light" and "purity of colour"; and notes in the Dudley (which he names "Work"), "one of Turner's first expressions of his full understanding of what England was to become."]

[4] [Plate XII.; from the outline drawing which is No. 223 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 95)—one of a series of designs illustrative of Apuleius' story of Psyche (see Nos. 64–72 in the same series, Vol. XXI. p. 81).]

Psyche received into Heaven

clearness and brightness first, and then on the order. Thus, in Chaucer's "Dream":

> "Within an yle me thought I was,
> Where wall and yate was all of glasse,
> And so was closed round about
> That leavelesse none come in ne out,
> Uncouth and straunge to beholde,
> For every yate of fine golde
> A thousand fanes, aie turning,
> Entuned had, and briddes singing
> Divers, and on each fane a paire
> With open mouth again here;
> And of a sute were all the toures
> Subtily corven after floures,
> Of uncouth colours during aye
> That never been none seene in May." [1]

98. Next to this drawing of Psyche I place two of Turner's most beautiful classical landscapes.[2] At once you are out of the open daylight, either in sunshine admitted partially through trembling leaves, or in the last rays of its setting, scarcely any more warm on the darkness of the ilex wood. In both, the vegetation, though beautiful, is absolutely wild and uncared for, as it seems, either by human or by higher powers, which, having appointed for it the laws of its being, leave it to spring into such beauty as is consistent with disease and alternate with decay.

In the purist landscape, the *human* subject is the immortality of the soul by the faithfulness of love: in both the Turner subjects it is the death of the body by the impatience and error of love. The one is the first glimpse of Hesperie to Aesacus:

> "Aspicit Hesperien patria Cebrenida ripa
> Injectos humeris siccantem sole capillos:" [3]

in a few moments to lose her for ever. The other is a mythological subject of deeper meaning, the death of Procris.

[1] [Lines 72–85 of the poem called *Chauceres Dreme*, no longer generally attributed to Chaucer.]

[2] [Plate XIII. (Aesacus and Hesperie) and Plate XIV. (Procris and Cephalus). For numerous other references to them, see General Index.]

[3] [Ovid: *Metamorphoses*, xi. 769.]

94. I just now referred to the landscape by John Bellini in the National Gallery[1] as one of the six best existing of the purist school, being wholly felicitous and enjoyable. In the foreground of it indeed is the martyrdom of Peter Martyr; but John Bellini looks upon that as an entirely cheerful and pleasing incident; it does not disturb or even surprise him, much less displease in the slightest degree.

Now, the next best landscape[2] to this, in the National Gallery, is a Florentine one on the edge of transition to the Greek feeling; and in that the distance is still beautiful, but misty, not clear; the flowers are still beautiful, but—intentionally—of the colour of blood; and in the foreground lies the dead body of Procris, which disturbs the poor painter greatly; and he has expressed his disturbed mind about it in the figure of a poor little brown—nearly black—Faun, or perhaps the god Faunus himself, who is much puzzled by the death of Procris, and stoops over her, thinking it a woful thing to find her pretty body lying there breathless, and all spotted with blood on the breast.

95. You remember I told you how the earthly power that is necessary in art was shown by the flight of Dædalus to the *ἐρετόν* Minos.[3] Look for yourselves at the story of Procris as related to Minos[4] in the fifteenth chapter of the

[1] [See above, §§ 77, 11, where it is named (p. 57) as one of the *five* best examples.]

[2] [*i.e.*, of the Purist school. The picture, No. 698, is "The Death of Procris" by Piero di Cosimo.]

[3] [See *Aratra Pentelici*, §§ 202, 206 (Vol. XX. p. 348), where Ruskin says that the work of Dædalus is "the giving of deceptive life, as that of Prometheus, the giving of real life"; and in that connexion refers to the works executed by Dædalus for Minos, who is figured in Dante under the form of the *ἐρετόν* (*ibid.*, § 207).]

[4] [That is, the story of Procris in her relations with Minos. According to Apollodorus (whose version of the story of Procris and Cephalus differs from that more commonly given) the faithless Procris, wedded to Cephalus (who, however, was not the son of Aurora, but beloved by her), had fled to Minos, and he had sought to hold her in those embraces, which by the art of Pasiphae, his angry wife, exposed all who submitted to them to the attacks of wild beasts. But Procris, by aid of some secret simple, avoided the consequences of the bestial power of Minos. Afterwards she returned to Cephalus, who slew her by accident in the chase. The myth of Semele desiring to see Zeus, who appeared to her as god of thunder and consumed her in the lightning-fire, is in Apollodorus, iii. 4; and that of Coronis, beloved but slain by Apollo, in the same author, iii. 10. Ruskin's thought

Acsacus and Hesperie

Etched by J. M. W. Turner. R.A.
Andre & Sleigh. Sc

**Procris and Cephalus**

**Procris and Cephalus**

third book of Apollodorus; and you will see why it is a Faun who is put to wonder at her, she having escaped by artifice from the Bestial power of Minos. Yet she is wholly an earth-nymph, and the son of Aurora must not only leave her, but himself slay her; the myth of Semele desiring to see Zeus, and of Apollo and Coronis, and this, having all the same main interest. Once understand that, and you will see why Turner has put her death under this deep shade of trees, the sun withdrawing his last ray; and why he has put beside her the low type of an animal's pain, a dog licking its wounded paw.

96. But now, I want you to understand Turner's depth of sympathy farther still. In both these high mythical subjects the surrounding nature, though suffering, is still dignified and beautiful. Every line in which the master traces it, even where seemingly negligent, is lovely, and set down with a meditative calmness which makes these two etchings[1] capable of being placed beside the most tranquil work of Holbein or Dürer. In this "Cephalus" especially, note the extreme equality and serenity of every outline. But now here is a subject[2] of which you will wonder at first why Turner drew it at all. It has no beauty whatsoever, no specialty of picturesqueness; and all its lines are cramped and poor.

in this section is somewhat elusive. He seems to read into all these tales the moral of a contrast between the fleshly and the spiritual, the earthly and the heavenly, the wild and half-diseased beauty of dark places of the earth and the consuming radiance of light and air. Semele meant for him the fruitful powers which must be quickened and consumed (see *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 183, Vol. XXI. p. 45). Coronis and Procris each represent "the death of the body by the impatience and error of love" (above, § 93); the victory of Apollo over the Python (see above, p. 64, and below, p. 204) is repeated in the slaying of Procris by Cephalus, the god of air and light, and of Coronis by Apollo. Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 211, where, in repeating the statement that "Turner belonged to the Greek school," he says that "just as on an Egyptian tomb the genius of death lays the sun down behind the horizon, so in his Cephalus and Procris, the last rays of the sun withdraw from the forest as the nymph expires."]

[1] [The etching of "Procris and Cephalus" was given in the 1897 edition of the *Lectures*, and is accordingly here included. An impression of the other etching is No. 249 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 97).]

[2] [Plate XVI., "Water Mill," from the *Liber Studiorum*: for another description of it, see No. 153 in the Rudimentary Series (Vol. XXI. p. 217).]

The crampness and the poverty are all intended. This is no longer to make us think of the death of happy souls, but of the labour of unhappy ones; at least, of the more or less limited, dullest, and—I must not say homely, but —unhomely life of the neglected agricultural poor.

It is a gleaner bringing down her one sheaf of corn to an old watermill, itself mossy and rent, scarcely able to get its stones to turn. An ill-bred dog stands, joyless, by the unfenced stream; two clumsy country boys lean, joyless, against a wall that is half broken down; and all about the steps down which the girl is bringing her sheaf, the bank of earth, flowerless and rugged, testifies only of its malignity; and in the black and sternly rugged etching—no longer graceful, but hard, and broken in every touch—the master insists upon the ancient curse of the earth—"Thorns also and Thistles shall it bring forth to thee."[1]

97. And now you will see at once with what feeling Turner completes, in a more tender mood, this lovely subject of his Yorkshire stream,[2] by giving it the conditions of pastoral and agricultural life; the cattle by the pool, the milkmaid crossing the bridge with her pail on her head, the mill with the old mill-stones, and its gleaming weir as his chief light led across behind the wild trees.

98. And not among our soft-flowing rivers only; but here among the torrents of the Great Chartreuse,[3] where another man would assuredly have drawn the monastery, Turner only draws their working mill. And here I am able to show you, fortunately, one of his works painted at this time of his most earnest thought;[4] when his imagination was still freshly filled with the Greek mythology, and he saw for the first time with his own eyes the clouds come down upon the actual earth.

[1] [Genesis iii. 18.]

[2] ["Kirkstall Abbey," in the "Rivers of England" Series. A copy of the engraving is No. 113 in the Educational Series: see Vol. XXI. pp. 85, 133.]

[3] [Plate XVII.; from *Liber Studiorum:* for another and similar reference to the plate, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 433).]

[4] [Plate XVIII., "L'Aiguillette," from the drawing in Ruskin's collection: see Vol. XIII. p. 420.]

Water Mill

**Mill near the Grande Chartreuse**

99. The scene is one which, in old times of Swiss travelling, you would all have known well; a little cascade which descends to the road from Geneva to Chamouni, near the village of Maglans, from under a subordinate ridge of the Aiguille de Varens, known as the Aiguillette. You, none of you, probably, know the scene now; for your only object is to get to Chamouni and up Mont Blanc and down again; but the Valley of Cluse, if you knew it, is worth many Chamounis;[1] and it impressed Turner profoundly. The facts of the spot are here given in mere and pure simplicity; a quite unpicturesque bridge, a few trees partly stunted and blasted by the violence of the torrent in storm at their roots, a cottage with its mill-wheel—this has lately been pulled down to widen the road—and the brook shed from the rocks and finding its way to join the Arve. The scene is absolutely Arcadian. All the traditions of the Greek Hills, in their purity, were founded on such rocks and shadows as these; and Turner has given you the birth of the Shepherd Hermes on Cyllene,[2] in its visible and solemn presence, the white cloud, Hermes Eriophoros, forming out of heaven upon the Hills; the brook, distilled from it, as the type of human life, born of the cloud and vanishing into the cloud, led down by the haunting Hermes among the ravines; and then, like the reflection of the cloud itself, the white sheep, with the dog of Argus guarding them, drinking from the stream.

100. And now, do you see why I gave you, for the beginning of your types of landscape thought, that "Junction of Tees and Greta"[3] in their misty ravines; and this glen of the Greta above, in which Turner has indeed done his best to paint the trees that live again after their autumn—the twilight that will rise again with twilight of

[1] [Compare Ruskin's letter from St. Martin in the Introduction to Vol. XXIII.]

[2] [For the birth of Hermes, as the god of cloud, on Mount Cyllene, see *Queen of the Air*, § 26 (Vol. XIX. p. 320); for Hermes Eriophoros (Hermes with his burden of woolly cloud), *ibid.*, § 29 (p. 325); and for Argus, *ibid.*, p. 324.]

[3] [Standard Series, No. 1 (engraving of Brignall Banks), and No. 2 (drawing of Greta and Tees): see Vol. XXI. p. 11.]

dawn—the stream that flows always, and the resting on the cliffs of the clouds that return if they vanish; but of human life, he says, a boy climbing among the trees for his entangled kite, and these white stones in the mountain churchyard, show forth all the strength and all the end.

101. You think that saying of the Greek school—Pindar's summary of it, "τί δέ τις; τί δ' οὔ τις;"[1]—a sorrowful and degrading lesson. See at least, then, that you reach the level of such degradation. See that your lives be in nothing worse than a boy's climbing for his entangled kite. It will be well for you if you join not with those who instead of kites fly falcons; who instead of obeying the last words of the great Cloud-Shepherd—to feed his sheep,[2] live the lives—how much less than vanity!—of the war-wolf and the gier-eagle. Or, do you think it a dishonour to man to say to him that Death is but only Rest? See that when it draws near to you, you may look to it, at least for sweetness of Rest; and that you recognize the Lord of Death coming to you as a Shepherd, gathering you into his Fold for the night.

[1] [*Pyth.* viii. 95: "Things of a day—what are we, and what not? Man is a dream of shadows."]
[2] [John xxi. 17.]

L' Aiguillette, Valley of Cluses

II

# THE RELATION BETWEEN MICHAEL ANGELO AND TINTORET

(LECTURE DELIVERED 1871; PUBLISHED 1872)

# THE RELATION

BETWEEN

# MICHAEL ANGELO

AND

# TINTORET.

SEVENTH OF THE COURSE OF

LECTURES ON SCULPTURE

DELIVERED AT OXFORD, 1870–71,

BY

JOHN RUSKIN,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRISTCHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

LONDON: PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR

BY SMITH, ELDER AND CO., 15, WATERLOO PLACE;

AND SOLD BY

MR. G. ALLEN, HEATHFIELD COTTAGE, KESTON, KENT.

1872.

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This lecture was delivered at Oxford in June 1871, and was separately published as a pamphlet.

*First Edition* (1872).—The title-page is as given here on the preceding leaf. The lecture is described as "Seventh of the Course of Lectures on Sculpture," but this description is, as already shown (Vol. XX. p. 185), inaccurate and misleading.

Octavo, pp. 46. Prefatory Note (here p. 76), p. 3; Text, pp. 5–45. Imprint (in the centre of the reverse of the last page): "London: Printed by Smith, Elder and Co., Old Bailey, E.C." The pages are headed "The Relation between | Michael Angelo and Tintoret."

Issued on April 13, 1872, in paper wrappers of a French grey colour, with the title-page (enclosed in a double ruled frame) reproduced upon the front, with the addition of the rose above the publisher's imprint and "*Price One Shilling*" below the date. 1000 copies.

*Second Edition* (1879).—This was a verbatim reprint, so far as the text is concerned, of the First. The title-page, after the author's description, continues: "Second Thousand. | George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1879." The imprint (on the centre of an additional page at the end) is "Chiswick Press:—C. Whittingham, Took's Court, | Chancery Lane."

Issued in July 1879 in buff-coloured paper wrappers, with the title-page (enclosed in a plain double ruled frame) repeated on the front, the rose being added. The price was again One Shilling. 1000 copies.

*Third Edition* (1887).—The title-page follows that of the Second Edition, with the number and date altered to "Third Edition" and "1887." The imprint (placed as in the Second Edition) is "Printed by Hazell, Watson, and Viney, Limited, London and Aylesbury." In this edition, on page 10, line 9 (here § 6, line 4), "sculpture" was misprinted "sculptor," and this misprint has been reproduced in all the editions of *Aratra Pentelici* containing the lecture.

Issued in September 1887, in French grey paper wrappers, and (unlike the former editions) with uncut edges. Title-page repeated on the front as before. Price again One Shilling. 500 copies. This edition is still current.

The lecture was next included by the publisher in the Third and subsequent editions of *Aratra Pentelici;* for particulars, see Vol. XX. p. 187.

The pamphlet was criticised by one of Ruskin's fellow Slade Professors, Sir Edward Poynter, in a lecture at the Slade School, University College, October 1875. The lecture is chapter ix. in Sir Edward's *Lectures on Art* (1879, pp. 217–251). Critical references to the lecture may also be found in J. A. Symonds's *Life of Michelangelo,* vol. i. p. 262; vol. ii. p. 66 (ed. 1893).

There is an *Italian translation* of part of the lecture at pp. 277–286 of *John Ruskin: Venezia . . . Traduzione e Note di Maria Pezzè Pascolato* (Firenze, 1901). The passages included are §§ 4, 5, 7–15, 19–22, 28 and 29.

In this edition the misprint above noticed has of course been corrected; and the words "The Seventh of the Course of Lectures on Sculpture delivered at Oxford, 1870–71," which in eds. 1–3 appeared below the title at the beginning of the lecture, are omitted. Also the paragraphs are now numbered §§ 1–35; § 1 being § 209 in the later editions of *Aratra Pentelici,* and so forth. In § 2, line 15, "45" in all previous editions (a misprint) is corrected to "43." In § 4, line 19, the misprint in all previous editions of "are" for "have" is here corrected.]

I HAVE printed this Lecture separately, that strangers visiting the Galleries may be able to use it for reference to the drawings. But they must observe that its business is only to point out what is to be blamed in Michael Angelo, and that it assumes the facts of his power to be generally known. Mr. Tyrwhitt's statement of these, in his *Lectures on Christian Art*, will put the reader into possession of all that may justly be alleged in honour of him.[1]

*Corpus Christi College*, 1*st May*, 1872.

[1] [Ruskin's Preface to Mr. Tyrwhitt's book is now appended; below, pp. 109, 110.]

# THE RELATION BETWEEN MICHAEL ANGELO AND TINTORET

1. In preceding lectures on sculpture[1] I have included references to the art of painting, so far as it proposes to itself the same object as sculpture (idealization of form); and I have chosen for the subject of our closing inquiry, the works of the two masters who accomplished or implied the unity of these arts. Tintoret entirely conceives his figures as solid statues: sees them in his mind on every side; detaches each from the other by imagined air and light; and foreshortens, interposes, or involves them as if they were pieces of clay in his hand. On the contrary, Michael Angelo conceives his sculpture partly as if it were painted; and using (as I told you formerly[2]) his pen like a chisel, uses also his chisel like a pencil; is sometimes as picturesque as Rembrandt, and sometimes as soft as Correggio.

It is of him chiefly that I shall speak to-day; both because it is part of my duty to the strangers here present to indicate for them some of the points of interest in the drawings forming part of the University collections; but still more, because I must not allow the second year of my professorship to close, without some statement of the mode in which those collections may be useful or dangerous to my pupils. They seem at present little likely to be either; for since I entered on my duties, no student has ever asked me a single question respecting these drawings,

[1] [That is, in *Aratra Pentelici* (Vol. XX.).]

[2] [See *Lectures on Art*, § 141 (Vol. XX. p. 131), where, it may be noticed, Ruskin refers to the collection of drawings by Michael Angelo and Raphael in more enthusiastic terms.]

or, so far as I could see, taken the slightest interest in them.

2. There are several causes for this which might be obviated—there is one which cannot be. The collection, as exhibited at present, includes a number of copies which mimic in variously injurious ways the characters of Michael Angelo's own work; and the series, except as material for reference, can be of no practical service until these are withdrawn, and placed by themselves. It includes, besides, a number of original drawings which are indeed of value to any laborious student of Michael Angelo's life and temper; but which owe the greater part of this interest to their being executed in times of sickness or indolence, when the master, however strong, was failing in his purpose, and, however diligent, tired of his work. It will be enough to name, as an example of this class, the sheet of studies for the Medici tombs, No. 43,[1] in which the lowest figure is, strictly speaking, neither a study nor a working drawing, but has either been scrawled in the feverish languor of exhaustion, which cannot escape its subject of thought; or, at best, in idly experimental addition of part to part, beginning with the head, and fitting muscle after muscle, and bone after bone, to it, thinking of their place only, not their proportion, till the head is only about one-twentieth part of the height of the body: finally, something between a face and a mask is blotted in the upper left-hand corner of the paper, indicative, in the weakness and frightfulness of it, simply of mental disorder from overwork; and there are several others of this kind, among even the better drawings of the collection, which ought never to be exhibited to the general public.

3. It would be easy, however, to separate these, with the acknowledged copies, from the rest; and, doing the same with the drawings of Raphael, among which a larger

[1] [The number is that given in the *Critical Account of the Drawings by Michael Angelo and Raffaello in the University Galleries, Oxford*, by J. C. Robinson, 1870. The collection remains as catalogued by Robinson, who, in his book, indicates the specimens which, in his opinion, are not authentic drawings.]

number are of true value, to form a connected series of deep interest to artists, in illustration of the incipient and experimental methods of design practised by each master.

I say, to artists. Incipient methods of design are not, and ought not to be, subjects of earnest inquiry to other people; and although the re-arrangement of the drawings would materially increase the chance of their gaining due attention, there is a final and fatal reason for the want of interest in them displayed by the younger students;—namely, that these designs have nothing whatever to do with present life, with its passions, or with its religion. What their historic value is, and relation to the life of the past, I will endeavour, so far as time admits, to explain to-day.

4. The course of Art divides itself hitherto, among all nations of the world that have practised it successfully, into three great periods.

The first, that in which their conscience is undeveloped, and their condition of life in many respects savage; but, nevertheless, in harmony with whatever conscience they possess. The most powerful tribes, in this stage of their intellect, usually live by rapine, and under the influence of vivid, but contracted, religious imagination. The early predatory activity of the Normans, and the confused minglings of religious subjects with scenes of hunting, war, and vile grotesque, in their first art, will sufficiently exemplify this state of a people; having, observe, their conscience undeveloped, but keeping their conduct in satisfied harmony with it.

The second stage is that of the formation of conscience by the discovery of the true laws of social order and personal virtue, coupled with sincere effort to live by such laws as they have discovered.

All the Arts advance steadily during this stage of national growth, and are lovely, even in their deficiencies, as the buds of flowers are lovely by their vital force, swift change, and continent beauty.

5. The third stage is that in which the conscience is entirely formed, and the nation, finding it painful to live in obedience to the precepts it has discovered, looks about to discover, also, a compromise for obedience to them. In this condition of mind its first endeavour is nearly always to make its religion pompous, and please the gods by giving them gifts and entertainments, in which it may piously and pleasurably share itself; so that a magnificent display of the powers of art it has gained by sincerity, takes place for a few years, and is then followed by their extinction, rapid and complete exactly in the degree in which the nation resigns itself to hypocrisy.

The works of Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Tintoret belong to this period of compromise in the career of the greatest nation of the world; and are the most splendid efforts yet made by human creatures to maintain the dignity of states with beautiful colours, and defend the doctrines of theology with anatomical designs.[1]

Farther, and as an universal principle, we have to remember that the Arts express not only the moral temper, but the scholarship, of their age; and we have thus to study them under the influence, at the same moment of, it may be, declining probity, and advancing science.

6. Now in this the Arts of Northern and Southern Europe stand exactly opposed. The Northern temper never accepts the Catholic faith with force such as it reached in Italy. Our sincerest thirteenth-century sculpture is cold and formal compared with that of the Pisani; nor can any Northern poet be set for an instant beside Dante, as an exponent of Catholic faith: on the contrary, the Northern temper accepts the scholarship of the Reformation with absolute sincerity, while the Italians seek refuge from it in the partly scientific and completely lascivious enthusiasms

[1] [The passage "The second stage . . ." (§ 4) down to "anatomical designs" was quoted in E. T. Cook's *Popular Handbook to the National Gallery*, when Ruskin added in a note (p. 9, 1888 edition), that "This analysis of the decline of religious faith does not enough regard the moral and material mischief which accompanied that decline."]

of literature and painting, renewed under classical influence. We therefore, in the north, produce our Shakespeare and Holbein; they their Petrarch and Raphael. And it is nearly impossible for you to study Shakespeare or Holbein too much, or Petrarch and Raphael too little.

I do not say this, observe, in opposition to the Catholic faith, or to any other faith, but only to the attempts to support whatsoever the faith may be, by ornament or eloquence, instead of action. Every man who honestly accepts, and acts upon, the knowledge granted to him by the circumstances of his time, has the faith which God intends him to have;—assuredly a good one, whatever the terms or form of it—every man who dishonestly refuses, or interestedly disobeys the knowledge open to him, holds a faith which God does not mean him to hold, and therefore a bad one, however beautiful or traditionally respectable.

7. Do not, therefore, I entreat you, think that I speak with any purpose of defending one system of theology against another; least of all, reformed against Catholic theology. There probably never was a system of religion so destructive to the loveliest arts and the loveliest virtues of men, as the modern Protestantism, which consists in an assured belief in the Divine forgiveness of all your sins, and the Divine correctness of all your opinions. But in the first searching and sincere activities, the doctrines of the Reformation produced the most instructive art, and the grandest literature, yet given to the world; while Italy, in her interested resistance to those doctrines, polluted and exhausted the arts she already possessed. Her iridescence of dying statesmanship—her magnificence of hollow piety,—were represented in the arts of Venice and Florence by two mighty men on either side—Titian and Tintoret,—Michael Angelo and Raphael. Of the calm and brave statesmanship, the modest and faithful religion, which had been her strength, I am content to name one chief representative artist at Venice,—John Bellini.

8. Let me now map out for you roughly the chronological relations of these five men. It is impossible to remember the minor years, in dates; I will give you them broadly in decades, and you can add what finesse afterwards you like.

Recollect, first, the great year 1480. Twice four's eight —you can't mistake it. In that year Michael Angelo was five years old; Titian, three years old; Raphael, within three years of being born.[1]

So see how easily it comes. Michael Angelo five years old—and you divide six between Titian and Raphael,—three on each side of your standard year, 1480.

Then add to 1480, forty years—an easy number to recollect, surely; and you get the exact year of Raphael's death, 1520.

In that forty years all the new effort and deadly catastrophe took place. 1480 to 1520.[2]

Now, you have only to fasten to those forty years, the life of Bellini, who represents the best art before them, and of Tintoret, who represents the best art after them.

9. I cannot fit you these on with a quite comfortable exactness, but with very slight inexactness I can fit them firmly.

John Bellini was ninety years old when he died. He lived fifty years before the great forty of change, and he saw the forty, and died. Then Tintoret is born; lives eighty* years after the forty, and closes, in dying, the sixteenth century, and the great arts of the world.

Those are the dates, roughly; now for the facts connected with them.

* If you like to have it with perfect exactitude, recollect that Bellini died at true ninety,—Tintoret at eighty-two; that Bellini's death was four years before Raphael's, and that Tintoret was born four years before Bellini's death.

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[1] [The exact dates (as usually given) are: Bellini, 1426–1516; Michael Angelo, 1475–1564; Titian, 1477–1576; Raphael, 1483–1520; Tintoret, 1519–1594.]

[2] [Compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 40 (below, p. 325).]

John Bellini precedes the change, meets, and resists it victoriously to his death. Nothing of flaw or failure is ever to be discerned in him.

. . .Then Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Titian, together, bring about the deadly change, playing into each other's hands—Michael Angelo being the chief captain in evil; Titian, in natural force.

Then Tintoret, himself alone nearly as strong as all the three, stands up for a last fight; for Venice, and the old time. He all but wins it at first; but the three together are too strong for him. Michael Angelo strikes him down; and the arts are ended. "Il disegno di Michael Agnolo."[1] That fatal motto was his death-warrant.

10. And now, having massed out my subject, I can clearly sketch for you the changes that took place from Bellini, through Michael Angelo, to Tintoret.

The art of Bellini is centrally represented by two pictures at Venice: one, the Madonna in the Sacristy of the Frari, with two saints beside her, and two angels at her feet; the second, the Madonna with four Saints, over the second altar of San Zaccaria.[2]

In the first of these, the figures are under life size, and it represents the most perfect kind of picture for rooms; in which, since it is intended to be seen close to the spectator, every right kind of finish possible to the hand may be wisely lavished; yet which is not a miniature, nor in any wise petty, or ignoble.[3]

[1] [The reference is to Tintoret's writing on a wall of his studio that he aimed at "the design of Michael Angelo and the colouring of Titian" (Vasari's *Lives*, vol. v. p. 51 *n.*, Bohn): compare below, p. 408.]

[2] [For a note on Ruskin's other selections of the best pictures by Bellini, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. p. 379 *n.*). In the *Catalogue of the Standard Series*, he selects yet another—namely, a picture formerly in the Pourtalès collection (Vol. XXI. p. 13).]

[3] [In the first draft of the lecture there is an additional passage on Bellini's workmanship:—

> "I have just said that the smaller of these two pictures represented the class in which every kind of right finish might be wisely lavished. It is indeed here so lavished that in the painting of the plumes of a single wing of one of the angels there is as much work as Tintoret sometimes employs for an entire group of figures. But this finish is, throughout, painter's work, and complete in the design of every touch. And herein

In the second, the figures are of life size, or a little more, and it represents the class of great pictures in which the boldest execution is used, but all brought to entire completion. These two, having every quality in balance, are as far as my present knowledge extends, and as far as I can trust my judgment, the two best pictures in the world.

11. Observe respecting them—

First, they are both wrought in entirely consistent and permanent material. The gold in them is represented by painting, not laid on with real gold. And the painting is so secure, that four hundred years have produced on it, so far as I can see, no harmful change whatsoever, of any kind.

Secondly, the figures in both are in perfect peace. No action takes place except that the little angels are playing on musical instruments, but with uninterrupted and effortless gesture, as in a dream. A choir of singing angels by La Robbia or Donatello would be intent on their music, or eagerly rapturous in it, as in temporary exertion:[1] in the little choirs of cherubs by Luini in the Adoration of the Shepherds, in the Cathedral of Como, we even feel by their dutiful anxiety that there might be danger of a false note if they were less attentive. But Bellini's angels, even the youngest, sing as calmly as the Fates weave.

12. Let me at once point out to you that this calmness is the attribute of the entirely highest class of art: the introduction of strong or violently emotional incident is at once a confession of inferiority.

let me at once explain to you a distinction of great importance between early German and Italian finish. In the German painting you will continually find the jewels and gold are imitated so skilfully that your pleasure must be in the realization and deception, rather than in the actual painting. You do not see what the touches are which produce the effect. But a great painter, however finely he works, makes his touch, or his *coup de pinceau*, visible, and the form of the touch itself is more delightful than the imitation it accomplishes. Bellini's gold is not quite so like gold as a German's would be, but every atom of paint is laid deliciously, and almost a gem in itself, and its form, selected and lovely."]

[1] [Compare "Modern Art," § 10, Vol. XIX. p. 203.]

Those are the two first attributes of the best art. Faultless workmanship, and perfect serenity; a continuous, not momentary, action,—or entire inaction. You are to be interested in the living creatures; not in what is happening to them.

Then the third attribute of the best art is that it compels you to think of the spirit of the creature, and therefore of its face, more than of its body.

And the fourth is that in the face you shall be led to see only beauty or joy;—never vileness, vice, or pain.

Those are the four essentials of the greatest art.[1] I repeat them, they are easily learned.

1. Faultless and permanent workmanship.
2. Serenity in state or action.
3. The Face principal, not the body.
4. And the Face free from either vice or pain.

13. It is not possible, of course, always literally to observe the second condition, that there shall be quiet action or none; but Bellini's treatment of violence in action you may see exemplified in a notable way in his St. Peter Martyr.[2] The soldier is indeed striking the sword down into his breast; but in the face of the Saint is only resignation, and faintness of death, not pain—that of the executioner is impassive; and, while a painter of the later schools would have covered breast and sword with blood, Bellini allows no stain of it; but pleases himself by the most elaborate and exquisite painting of a soft crimson feather in the executioner's helmet.

14. Now the changes brought about by Michael Angelo —and permitted, or persisted in calamitously, by Tintoret —are in the four points these:

1st. Bad workmanship.

[1] [Compare the characterisation of "the Age of the Masters" given in "Verona and its Rivers," §§ 25-28 (Vol. XIX. pp. 443-445).]

[2] [No. 812 in the National Gallery. For other references to the picture, see "Verona and its Rivers," § 27 (Vol. XIX. p. 445); and *Lectures on Landscape*, §§ 11, 77, 94 (above, pp. 19, 57, 66). And on the importance of "serenity in state or action," compare "Modern Art,' § 10 (Vol. XIX. p. 203).]

The greater part of all that these two men did is hastily and incompletely done; and all that they did on a large scale in colour is in the best qualities of it perished.

2nd. Violence of transitional action.

The figures flying,—falling,—striking,—or biting. Scenes of Judgment, — battle, — martyrdom, — massacre; anything that is in the acme of instantaneous interest and violent gesture. They cannot any more trust their public to care for anything but that.

3rd. Physical instead of mental interest. The body, and its anatomy, made the entire subject of interest: the face, shadowed, as in the Duke Lorenzo,* unfinished, as in the Twilight, or entirely foreshortened, backshortened, and despised, among labyrinths of limbs, and mountains of sides and shoulders.

4th. Evil chosen rather than good. On the face itself, instead of joy or virtue, at the best, sadness, probably pride, often sensuality, and always, by preference, vice or agony as the subject of thought. In the Last Judgment of Michael Angelo, and the Last Judgment of Tintoret, it is the wrath of the Dies Iræ, not its justice, in which they delight; and their only passionate thought of the coming of Christ in the clouds, is that all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.[1]

* Julian, rather. See Mr. Tyrwhitt's notice of the lately discovered error, in his *Lectures on Christian Art*.[2]

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[1] [Revelation i. 7.]

[2] ["The tomb of Giuliano de' Medici mistaken for his brother Lorenzo, and named the Duke Lorenzo," p. 41. Sir Edward Poynter accepts this correction (*Lectures on Art*, p. 248 *n.*). J. A. Symonds, however, decides that "no doubt now remains that tradition is accurate in identifying the helmeted Duke with Lorenzo" (*Life of Michelangelo*, vol. ii. p. 22, ed. 1893). It is the figure of Duke Lorenzo (known also as Il Pensieroso) that Ruskin here refers to; below it are the figures of Dawn and Twilight. The figure of Giuliano de' Medici is opposite, surmounting the figures of Day and Night.]

Those are the four great changes wrought by Michael Angelo. I repeat them:

Ill work for good.
Tumult for Peace.
The Flesh of Man for his Spirit.
And the Curse of God for His blessing.

15. Hitherto, I have massed, necessarily, but most unjustly, Michael Angelo and Tintoret together, because of their common relation to the art of others. I shall now proceed to distinguish the qualities of their own. And first as to the general temper of the two men.

Nearly every existing work by Michael Angelo is an attempt to execute something beyond his power, coupled with a fevered desire that his power may be acknowledged.[1] He is always matching himself either against the Greeks whom he cannot rival, or against rivals whom he cannot forget. He is proud, yet not proud enough to be at peace; melancholy, yet not deeply enough to be raised above petty pain; and strong beyond all his companion workmen, yet never strong enough to command his temper, or limit his aims.

Tintoret, on the contrary, works in the consciousness of supreme strength, which cannot be wounded by neglect, and is only to be thwarted by time and space. He knows precisely all that art can accomplish under given conditions; determines absolutely how much of what can be done he will himself for the moment choose to do; and fulfils his purpose with as much ease as if, through his human body, were working the great forces of nature. Not that he is ever satisfied with what he has done, as vulgar and feeble artists are satisfied. He falls short of his ideal, more than any other man; but not more than is necessary; and is content to fall short of it to that degree, as he is content that his figures, however well painted, do not move

[1] [For Ruskin's earlier, and different, reading of Michael Angelo's character, see *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 288 and *n.*).]

nor speak. He is also entirely unconcerned respecting the satisfaction of the public. He neither cares to display his strength to them, nor convey his ideas to them; when he finishes his work, it is because he is in the humour to do so; and the sketch which a meaner painter would have left incomplete to show how cleverly it was begun, Tintoret simply leaves because he has done as much of it as he likes.

16. Both Raphael and Michael Angelo are thus, in the most vital of all points, separate from the great Venetian. They are always in dramatic attitudes, and always appealing to the public for praise. They are the leading athletes in the gymnasium of the arts, and the crowd of the circus cannot take its eyes away from them; while the Venetian walks or rests with the simplicity of a wild animal; is scarcely noticed in his occasionally swifter motion; when he springs, it is to please himself; and so calmly, that no one thinks of estimating the distance covered.

I do not praise him wholly in this. I praise him only for the well-founded pride, infinitely nobler than Michael Angelo's. You do not hear of Tintoret's putting any one into hell because they had found fault with his work.[1] Tintoret would as soon have thought of putting a dog into hell for laying his paws on it. But he is to be blamed in this—that he thinks as little of the pleasure of the public, as of their opinion. A great painter's business is to do what the public ask of him, in the way that shall be helpful and instructive to them. His relation to them is exactly that of a tutor to a child; he is not to defer to their judgment, but he is carefully to form it;—not to consult their pleasure for his own sake, but to consult it much for theirs. It was scarcely, however, possible that this should be the case between Tintoret and his Venetians; he could not paint for the people, and in some respects he was happily protected by his subordination to the Senate.

[1] [The reference is to Vasari's story about Messer Biagio de Cesena, Master of the Ceremonies, who criticised to the Pope the nudity of the figures in Michael Angelo's fresco of the "Last Judgment." The master thereupon drew Biagio's portrait from memory and placed him in hell as Minos, surrounded by a crowd of devils (*Lives of the Painters*, vol. v. p. 286, Bohn).]

Raphael and Michael Angelo lived in a world of court intrigue, in which it was impossible to escape petty irritation, or refuse themselves the pleasure of mean victory. But Tintoret and Titian, even at the height of their reputation, practically lived as craftsmen in their workshops, and sent in samples of their wares, not to be praised or cavilled at, but to be either taken or refused.

17. I can clearly and adequately set before you these relations between the great painters of Venice and her Senate—relations which, in monetary matters, are entirely right and exemplary for all time—by reading to you two decrees of the Senate itself, and one petition to it. The first document shall be the decree of the Senate for giving help to John Bellini, in finishing the compartments of the great Council Chamber; granting him three assistants — one of them Victor Carpaccio.

The decree, first referring to some other business, closes in these terms: *

"There having moreover offered his services to this effect our most faithful citizen, Zuan Bellin, according to his agreement employing his skill and all speed and diligence for the completion of this work of the three pictures aforesaid, provided he be assisted by the under-written painters.

"Be it therefore put to the ballot, that besides the aforesaid Zuan Bellin in person, who will assume the superintendence of this work, there be added Master Victor Scarpaza, with a monthly salary of five ducats; Master Victor, son of the late Mathio, at four ducats per month; and the painter, Hieronymo, at two ducats per month; they rendering speedy and diligent assistance to the aforesaid Zuan Bellin for the painting of the pictures aforesaid, so that they be completed well and carefully as speedily as possible. The salaries of the which three master painters aforesaid, with the costs of colours and other necessaries, to be defrayed by our Salt Office with the monies of the great chest.

* From the invaluable series of documents relating to Titian and his times, extricated by Mr. Rawdon Brown from the archives of Venice, and arranged and translated by him.[1]

[1] [But not published; and it is possible that Ruskin here attributes to Rawdon Brown the privately-issued collection of documents, arranged by Edward Cheney, which is referred to in the Guide to the Academy at Venice (Vol. XXIV.). The documents here cited may be read in the following collection: *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale di Venezia*, by Giambattista Lorenzi, Venice, 1868 (a work which is dedicated to Ruskin, and to which he had given financial assistance). The decree translated above is No. 296 (p. 142).

"It being expressly declared that said pensioned painters be tied and bound to work constantly and daily, so that said three pictures may be completed as expeditiously as possible; the artists aforesaid being pensioned at the good pleasure of this Council.

| | |
|---|---|
| "Ayes . . . . . | 23 |
| "Noes . . . . . | 3 |
| "Neutrals . . . . . | 0" |

This decree is the more interesting to us now, because it is the precedent to which Titian himself refers, when he first offers his services to the Senate.

The petition which I am about to read to you, was read to the Council of Ten, on the last day of May, 1513, and the original draft of it is yet preserved in the Venice archives.[1]

"'Most Illustrious Council of Ten.
"'Most Serene Prince and most Excellent Lords.

"'I, Titian of Serviete de Cadore, having from my boyhood upwards set myself to learn the art of painting, not so much from cupidity of gain as for the sake of endeavouring to acquire some little fame, and of being ranked amongst those who now profess the said art.

"'And altho, heretofore, and likewise at this present, I have been earnestly requested by the Pope and other potentates to go and serve them, nevertheless, being anxious as your Serenity's most faithful subject, for such I am, to leave some memorial in this famous city; my determination is, should the Signory approve, *to undertake, so long as I live, to come and paint in the Grand Council with my whole soul and ability;* commencing, provided your Serenity think of it, with the battle-piece on the side towards the "Piaza," that being the most difficult; nor down to this time has any one chosen to assume so hard a task.

"'I, most excellent Lords, should be better pleased to receive as recompence for the work to be done by me, such acknowledgments as may be deemed sufficient, and much less; but because, as already stated by me, I care solely for my honour, and mere livelihood, should your Serenity approve, you will vouchsafe to grant me for my life, the next brokers-patent in the German factory,* by whatever means it may become vacant; notwithstanding other expectancies; with the terms, conditions, obligations,

* Fondaco de' Tedeschi. I saw the last wrecks of Giorgione's frescoes on the outside of it in 1845.[2]

[1] [No. 337 in Lorenzi's *Monumenti* (pp. 157–158), followed by the document here translated on p. 91 (No. 338, p. 158).]

[2] [For other references to these frescoes, see Vol. III. p. 212; Vol. VII. p. 439; and Vol. XI. p. 378.]

and exemptions, as in the case of Messer Zuan Bellini; besides two youths whom I purpose bringing with me as assistants; they to be paid by the Salt Office; as likewise the colours and all other requisites, as conceded a few months ago by the aforesaid most Illustrious Council to the said Messer Zuan; for I promise to do such work and with so much speed and excellency as shall satisfy your lordships to whom I humbly recommend myself.'"

18. "This proposal," Mr. Brown tells us, "in accordance with the petitions presented by Gentil Bellini and Alvise Vivarini, was immediately put to the ballot," and carried thus—the decision of the Grand Council, in favour of Titian, being, observe, by no means unanimous:

| | |
|---|---|
| "Ayes . . . . . | 10 |
| "Noes . . . . . | 6 |
| "Neutrals . . . . . | 0" |

Immediately follows on the acceptance of Titian's services, this practical order:

"We, Chiefs of the most Illustrious Council of Ten, tell and inform you Lords Proveditors for the State; videlicet the one who is cashier of the Great Chest, and his successors, that for the execution of what has been decreed above in the most Illustrious Council aforesaid, you do have prepared all necessaries for the above written Titian according to his petition and demand, and as observed with regard to Juan Bellini, that he may paint ut supra; paying from month to month the two youths whom said Titian shall present to you at the rate of four ducats each per month, as urged by him because of their skill and sufficiency in said art of painting, tho' we do not mean the payment of their salary to commence until they begin work; and thus will you do. Given on the 8th of June, 1513."

This is the way, then, the great workmen wish to be paid, and that is the way wise men pay them for their work. The perfect simplicity of such patronage leaves the painter free to do precisely what he thinks best: and a good painter always produces his best, with such license.

19. And now I shall take the four conditions of change in succession, and examine the distinctions between the two masters in their acceptance of, or resistance to, them.

(I.) The change of good and permanent workmanship for bad and insecure workmanship.

You have often heard quoted the saying of Michael Angelo, that oil-painting was only fit for women and children.[1]

He said so, simply because he had neither the skill to lay a single touch of good oil-painting, nor the patience to overcome even its elementary difficulties.

And it is one of my reasons for the choice of subject in this concluding lecture on Sculpture, that I may, with direct reference to this much quoted saying of Michael Angelo, make the positive statement to you, that oil-painting is the Art of arts;* that it is sculpture, drawing, and music, all in one, involving the technical dexterities of those three several arts; that is to say—the decision and strength of the stroke of the chisel;—the balanced distribution of appliance of that force necessary for graduation in light and shade;—and the passionate felicity of rightly multiplied actions, all unerring, which on an instrument produce right sound, and on canvas, living colour. There is no other

* I beg that this statement may be observed with attention.[2] It is of great importance, as in opposition to the views usually held respecting the grave schools of painting.

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[1] ["Sebastiano del Piombo was much beloved by Michelangelo, but it is also true that when that part of the chapel whereon is executed the Last Judgment of Buonarroti had to be painted, there did arise some anger between them; Sebastiano having persuaded the Pope to make Michelangelo execute the work in oil, while the latter would do it in no other manner than fresco. But Michelangelo saying neither yes nor no, the wall was prepared after the fashion of Fra Sebastiano, and Buonarroti suffered it to remain thus for several months, without doing anything to the work. At length, and when pressed on the subject, he declared that he would only do it in fresco, 'oil-painting being an art only fit for women, or idle and leisurely people like Fra Bastiano'" (Vasari, vol. iv. p. 74, Bohn's edition). Sir Edward Poynter lays stress on the context of Michael Angelo's remark, which, he argues, "was rather intended as a sarcasm on Sebastian del Piombo's laziness" than as "a sweeping disparagement of oil-painting." The nature of oil-painting, he continues, "allows the work to be dropped and taken up again at will, so making it suitable for women (who may be supposed to be liable to interruption from other occupations) and for idle persons; fresco-painting, on the other hand, requiring continuous and concentrated effort, on account of the limited time during which the plaster remains in fit condition to be worked upon, after which it can never be touched again, except by a different process, which takes from its special character" (Poynter's *Lectures on Art*, p. 223 *n.*, ed. 1897).]

[2] [Compare Vol. X. p. 456, Vol. XII. p. xli., and Vol. XX. p. 120.]

human skill so great or so wonderful as the skill of fine oil-painting; and there is no other art whose results are so absolutely permanent. Music is gone as soon as produced—marble discolours,—fresco fades,—glass darkens or decomposes—painting alone, well guarded, is practically everlasting.

Of this splendid art Michael Angelo understood nothing; he understood even fresco, imperfectly. Tintoret understood both perfectly; but he—when no one would pay for his colours (and sometimes nobody would even give him space of wall to paint on[1])—used cheap blue for ultramarine; and he worked so rapidly, and on such huge spaces of canvas, that between damp and dry, his colours must go, for the most part; but any complete oil-painting of his stands as well as one of Bellini's own: while Michael Angelo's fresco is defaced already in every part of it, and Leonardo's oil-painting is all either gone black, or gone to nothing.[2]

20. (II.) Introduction of dramatic interest for the sake of excitement. I have already, in the *Stones of Venice*, illustrated Tintoret's dramatic power at so great length,[3] that I will not, to-day, make any farther statement to justify my assertion that it is as much beyond Michael Angelo's as Shakespeare's is beyond Milton's—and somewhat with the same kind of difference in manner. Neither can I speak to-day, time not permitting me, of the abuse of their dramatic power by Venetian or Florentine; one thing only I beg you to note, that with full half of his strength, Tintoret remains faithful to the serenity of the past; and

[1] [See Vasari, vol. v. p. 56, Bohn's edition.]

[2] [It is just to remember that Michael Angelo's fresco of the "Last Judgment" in the Sistine Chapel has suffered not only from the damp of three centuries, but also from the smoke of candles and incense, as also from neglect. On these matters see Poynter's *Lectures on Art*, pp. 227–229. For another reference to Leonardo in this sense, see Vol. XIX. pp. 129–130.]

[3] [See Vol. XI. pp. 400 *seq.*; and compare *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. pp. 262 *seq.*).]

the examples I have given you from his work in S. 50,* are, one, of the most splendid drama, and the other, of the quietest portraiture ever attained by the arts of the Middle Ages.

Note also this respecting his picture of the Judgment,[1] that, in spite of all the violence and wildness of the imagined scene, Tintoret has not given, so far as I remember, the spectacle of any one soul under infliction of actual pain. In all previous representations of the Last Judgment there had at least been one division of the picture set apart for the representation of torment; and even the gentle Angelico shrinks from no orthodox detail in this respect; but Tintoret, too vivid and true in imagination to be able to endure the common thoughts of hell, represents indeed the wicked in ruin, but not in agony. They are swept down by flood and whirlwind—the place of them shall know them no more,[2] but not one is seen in more than the natural pain of swift and irrevocable death.

21. (III.) I pass to the third condition; the priority of flesh to spirit, and of the body to the face.

In this alone, of the four innovations, Michael Angelo and Tintoret have the Greeks with them;—in this, alone, have they any right to be called classical. The Greeks gave them no excuse for bad workmanship; none for temporary passion; none for the preference of pain. Only in the honour done to the body may be alleged for them the authority of the ancients.

* The upper photograph in S. 50[3] is, however, not taken from the great Paradise, which is in too dark a position to be photographed, but from a study of it existing in a private gallery,[4] and every way inferior. I have vainly tried to photograph portions of the picture itself.

[1] [In the Church of S. Maria dell' Orto: see the descriptions of the picture in Vol. IV. pp. xxxvi.–xxxvii., 277, and Vol. XI. pp. 395–396.]

[2] [See Psalms ciii. 16.]

[3] [See the *Catalogue of the Standard Series* (Vol. XXI. p. 27).]

[4] [This is a slip. The study for the picture, from which the photograph is taken, is in the Prado Gallery at Madrid. It was purchased by Velasquez for Philip IV. of Spain. The other photograph in Frame No. 50 of the Standard Series is of the portrait of "Two Senators" in the Academy at Venice.]

You remember, I hope, how often in my preceding lectures I had to insist on the fact that Greek sculpture was essentially ἀπρόσωπος;—independent, not only of the expression, but even of the beauty of the face.[1] Nay, independent of its being so much as seen. The greater number of the finest pieces of it which remain for us to judge by, have had the heads broken away;—we do not seriously miss them either from the Three Fates, the Ilissus, or the Torso of the Vatican.[2] The face of the Theseus is so far destroyed by time that you can form little conception of its former aspect. But it is otherwise in Christian sculpture. Strike the head off even the rudest statue in the porch of Chartres and you will greatly miss it—the harm would be still worse to Donatello's St. George:[3]—and if you take the heads from a statue of Mino, or a painting of Angelico —very little but drapery will be left;—drapery made redundant in quantity and rigid in fold, that it may conceal the forms, and give a proud or ascetic reserve to the actions, of the bodily frame. Bellini and his school, indeed, rejected at once the false theory, and the easy mannerism, of such religious design; and painted the body without fear or reserve, as, in its subordination, honourable and lovely. But the inner heart and fire of it are by them always first thought of, and no action is given to it merely to show its beauty. Whereas the great culminating masters, and chiefly of these, Tintoret, Correggio, and Michael Angelo, delight in the body for its own sake, and cast it into every conceivable attitude, often in violation of all natural probability, that they may exhibit the action of its skeleton, and the contours of its flesh. The movement of a hand

[1] [See *Lectures on Landscape*, § 58 (above, p. 46).]

[2] [The "Three Fates" (though the identification is doubtful) are the headless figures from the pediment of the Parthenon, now in the British Museum: for another reference to them, see below, p. 502. Opposite them is the recumbent figure known as the Ilissus; for another reference to it, see Vol. IX. p. 466; and for the Torso of the Vatican, see Vol. III. p. 606. For the Theseus, see Vol. IV. p. 119 and Vol. XVI. p. 271.]

[3] [For this work, see the lecture on "Modern Art," § 10 (Vol. XIX. p. 203); the original work has now been removed to the Bargello, a cast being inserted in its niche on Or San Michele.]

with Cima or Bellini expresses mental emotion only; but the clustering and twining of the fingers of Correggio's St. Catherine[1] is enjoyed by the painter just in the same way as he would enjoy the twining of the branches of a graceful plant, and he compels them into intricacies which have little or no relation to St. Catherine's mind. In the two drawings of Correggio (S. 18 and 14)[2] it is the rounding of limbs and softness of foot resting on cloud which are principally thought of in the form of the Madonna; and the countenance of St. John is foreshortened into a section, that full prominence may be given to the muscles of his arms and breast.

So in Tintoret's drawing of the Graces (S. 22),[3] he has entirely neglected the individual character of the Goddesses, and been content to indicate it merely by attributes of dice or flower, so only that he may sufficiently display varieties of contour in thigh and shoulder.

22. Thus far, then, the Greeks, Correggio, Michael Angelo, Raphael in his latter design, and Tintoret in his scenic design (as opposed to portraiture), are at one. But the Greeks, Correggio, and Tintoret, are also together in this farther point; that they all draw the body for true delight in it, and with knowledge of it living; while Michael Angelo and Raphael draw the body for vanity, and from knowledge of it dead.

The Venus of Melos,—Correggio's Venus, (with Mercury teaching Cupid to read),[4]—and Tintoret's Graces, have the forms which their designers truly *liked* to see in women. They may have been wrong or right in liking those forms, but they carved and painted them for their pleasure, not for vanity.

But the form of Michael Angelo's Night is not one

[1] [One of the figures in the picture known as "Il Giorno" in the Parma Gallery: see Vol. IV. p. 197.]

[2] [See *Catalogue of the Standard Series* (Vol. XXI. pp. 18–19).]

[3] [A photograph of "Mercury and the Graces" (the picture in the Ducal Palace): see Vol. XXI. p. 22.]

[4] [For other references to the Venus of Melos, see Vol. XIX. p. 413 *n.*; and for the picture by Correggio (No. 10 in the National Gallery), *ibid.*, p. 29 *n.*]

which he delighted to see in women. He gave it her, because he thought it was fine, and that he would be admired for reaching so lofty an ideal.*

23. Again. The Greeks, Correggio, and Tintoret, learn the body from the living body, and delight in its breath, colour, and motion.†

Raphael and Michael Angelo learned it essentially from the corpse, and had no delight in it whatever, but great pride in showing that they knew all its mechanism; they therefore sacrifice its colours, and insist on its muscles, and surrender the breath and fire of it, for what is—not merely carnal,—but osseous, knowing that for one person who can recognize the loveliness of a look, or the purity of a colour, there are a hundred who can calculate the length of a bone.

The boy with the doves, in Raphael's cartoon of the Beautiful Gate of the Temple,[1] is not a child running, but a surgical diagram of a child in a running posture.

Farther, when the Greeks, Correggio, and Tintoret, draw the body active, it is because they rejoice in its force, and when they draw it inactive, it is because they rejoice in its repose. But Michael Angelo and Raphael invent for it ingenious mechanical motion, because they think it uninteresting when it is quiet, and cannot, in their pictures, endure any person's being simple-minded enough to stand upon both his legs at once, nor venture to imagine any

* He had, indeed, other and more solemn thoughts of the Night than Correggio; and these he tried to express by distorting form, and making her partly Medusa-like. In this lecture, as above stated,[2] I am only dwelling on points hitherto unnoticed of dangerous evil in the too much admired master.[3]

† Tintoret dissected, and used clay models, in the true academical manner, and produced academical results thereby; but all his fine work is done from life, like that of the Greeks.

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[1] [At the South Kensington Museum; for another reference to it, see Vol. IX. p. 357.]

[2] [In the Prefatory Note; above, p. 76.]

[3] [For Ruskin's admiration of the "Night" of Michael Angelo (in the Medici Chapel) elsewhere expressed, see Vol. IV. p. 282, and Vol. V. p. 134; and for his criticism of Correggio's "Notte," Vol. VII. p. 492.]

one's being clear enough in his language to make himself intelligible without pointing.

In all these conditions, the Greek and Venetian[1] treatment of the body is faithful, modest, and natural; but Michael Angelo's dishonest, insolent, and artificial.

24. But between him and Tintoret there is a separation deeper than all these, when we examine their treatment of the face. Michael Angelo's vanity of surgical science rendered it impossible for him ever to treat the body as well as the Greeks treated it; but it left him wholly at liberty to treat the face as ill; and he did: and in some respects very curiously worse.

The Greeks had, in all their work, one type of face for beautiful and honourable persons; and another, much contrary to it, for dishonourable ones; and they were continually setting these in opposition. Their type of beauty lay chiefly in the undisturbed peace and simplicity of all contours; in full roundness of chin; in perfect formation of the lips, showing neither pride nor care; and, most of all, in a straight and firm line from the brow to the end of the nose.

The Greek type of dishonourable persons, especially satyrs, fauns, and sensual powers, consisted in irregular excrescence and decrement of features, especially in flatness of the upper part of the nose, and projection of the end of it into a blunt knob.

By the most grotesque fatality, as if the personal bodily injury he had himself received[2] had passed with a sickly echo into his mind also, Michael Angelo is always dwelling on this satyric form of countenance;—sometimes violently caricatures it, but never can help drawing it; and all

[1] [On the Venetian rendering of the human body, see *Cambridge Inaugural Address*, § 23 (Vol. XVI. p. 198).]

[2] ["The front view of the forehead is square, the nose a little flattened, not naturally, but because, when he was a boy, one Torrigiano, a brutal and proud fellow, with a blow almost broke the cartilage, so that Michael Angelo was carried home as one dead; for this Torrigiano was banished from Florence, and he came to bad end" (Condivi's *Life of Michael Angelo*, § 69; p. 91 in Sir Charles Holroyd's translation). Torrigiano's own account of the matter is in Benvenuto Cellini's Life (vol. i. p. 27 of Symonds's translation, ed. 1888).]

the best profiles in this collection at Oxford have what Mr. Robinson calls a "nez retroussé"; but what is, in reality, the nose of the Greek Bacchic mask, treated as a dignified feature.

25. For the sake of readers who cannot examine the drawings themselves, and lest I should be thought to have exaggerated in any wise the statement of this character, I quote Mr. Robinson's description of the head, No. 9—a celebrated and entirely authentic drawing, on which, I regret to say, my own pencil comment in passing is merely "brutal lower lip, and broken nose":—

"This admirable study was probably made from nature, additional character and more powerful expression having been given to it by a slight exaggeration of details, bordering on caricature (observe the protruding lower lip, 'nez retroussé,' and overhanging forehead). The head, in profile, turned to the right, is proudly planted on a massive neck and shoulders, and the short tufted hair stands up erect. The expression is that of fierce, insolent self-confidence and malevolence; it is engraved in facsimile in Ottley's *Italian School of Design*, and it is described in that work, p. 33, as 'Finely expressive of scornfulness and pride, and evidently a study from nature.'

"Michel Angelo has made use of the same ferocious-looking model on other occasions—see an instance in the well-known 'Head of Satan' engraved in Woodburn's Lawrence Gallery (No. 16), and now in the Malcolm Collection.

"The study on the reverse of the leaf is more lightly executed; it represents a man of powerful frame, carrying a hog or boar in his arms before him, the upper part of his body thrown back to balance the weight, his head hidden by that of the animal, which rests on the man's right shoulder.

"The power displayed in every line and touch of these drawings is inimitable—the head was in truth one of the 'teste divine,' and the hand which executed it the 'mano terribile,' so enthusiastically alluded to by Vasari."[1]

26. Passing, for the moment, by No. 10, a "young woman of majestic character, marked by a certain expression of brooding melancholy," and "wearing on her head a fantastic cap or turban";—by No. 11, a bearded man, "wearing a conical Phrygian cap, his mouth wide open," and his expression "obstreperously animated";—and by

[1] [*Critical Account*, etc., pp. 10–11. The extracts in §§ 26, 27, 28 are from the same book, pp. 11, 12, 13, 40, 41.]

No. 12, "a middle-aged or old man, with a snub nose, high forehead, and thin, scrubby hair," we will go on to the fairer examples of divine heads in No. 32:—

"This splendid sheet of studies is probably one of the 'carte stupendissime di teste divine,' which Vasari says (*Vita*, p. 272) Michel Angelo executed, as presents or lessons for his artistic friends. Not improbably it is actually one of those made for his friend Tommaso dei Cavalieri, who, when young, was desirous of learning to draw."

But it is one of the chief misfortunes affecting Michael Angelo's reputation, that his ostentatious display of strength and science has a natural attraction for comparatively weak and pedantic persons. And this sheet of Vasari's "teste divine" contains, in fact, not a single drawing of high quality—only one of moderate agreeableness, and two caricatured heads, one of a satyr with hair like the fur of animals, and one of a monstrous and sensual face, such as could only have occurred to the sculptor in a fatigued dream, and which in my own notes I have classed with the vile face in No. 45.

27. Returning, however, to the divine heads above it, I wish you to note "the most conspicuous and important of all," a study for one of the Genii behind the Sibylla Libyca. This Genius, like the young woman of a majestic character, and the man with his mouth open, wears a cap, or turban; opposite to him in the sheet, is a female in profile, "wearing a hood of massive drapery." And, when once your attention is directed to this point, you will perhaps be surprised to find how many of Michael Angelo's figures, intended to be sublime, have their heads bandaged.[1] If you have been a student of Michael Angelo chiefly, you may easily have vitiated your taste to the extent of thinking that this is a dignified costume; but if you study Greek work, instead, you will find that nothing is more

[1] [See, for instance, the Cumæan Sibyl; Plate XXXII. in this volume (below, p. 449).]

important in the system of it than a finished disposition of the hair;[1] and as soon as you acquaint yourself with the execution of carved marbles generally, you will perceive these massy fillets to be merely a cheap means of getting over a difficulty too great for Michael Angelo's patience, and too exigent for his invention. They are not sublime arrangements, but economies of labour, and reliefs from the necessity of design; and if you had proposed to the sculptor of the Venus of Melos, or of the Jupiter of Olympia, to bind the ambrosial locks up in towels, you would most likely have been instantly bound, yourself; and sent to the nearest temple of Æsculapius.

I need not, surely, tell you,—I need only remind,—how in all these points, the Venetians and Correggio reverse Michael Angelo's evil, and vanquish him in good; how they refuse caricature, rejoice in beauty, and thirst for opportunity of toil. The waves of hair in a single figure of Tintoret's (the Mary Magdalen of the Paradise) contain more intellectual design in themselves alone than all the folds of unseemly linen in the Sistine chapel put together.

28. In the fourth and last place, as Tintoret does not sacrifice, except as he is forced by the exigences of display, the face for the body, so also he does not sacrifice happiness for pain. The chief reason why we all know the "Last Judgment" of Michael Angelo, and not the "Paradise" of Tintoret, is the same love of sensation which makes us read the *Inferno* of Dante, and not his *Paradise*;[2] and the choice, believe me, is our fault, not his; some farther evil influence is due to the fact that Michael Angelo has invested all his figures with picturesque and palpable elements of effect, while Tintoret has only made them lovely in themselves and has been content that they should deserve, not demand, your attention.

29. You are accustomed to think the figures of Michael

[1] [On this subject compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 120, "Notes on the Educational Series," No. 100 (Vol. XXI. p. 126).]

[2] [Compare Vol. X. p. 379, and Vol. XVII. p. 475.]

Angelo sublime—because they are dark, and colossal, and involved, and mysterious—because, in a word, they look sometimes like shadows, and sometimes like mountains, and sometimes like spectres, but never like human beings. Believe me, yet once more, in what I told you long since[1]—man can invent nothing nobler than humanity. He cannot raise his form into anything better than God made it, by giving it either the flight of birds or strength of beasts, by enveloping it in mist, or heaping it into multitude. Your pilgrim must look like a pilgrim in a straw hat, or you will not make him into one with cockle and nimbus; an angel must look like an angel on the ground, as well as in the air; and the much-denounced pre-Raphaelite faith that a saint cannot look saintly unless he has thin legs, is not more absurd than Michael Angelo's, that a Sibyl cannot look Sibylline unless she has thick ones.

80. All that shadowing, storming, and coiling of his, when you look into it, is mere stage decoration, and that of a vulgar kind. Light is, in reality, more awful than darkness—modesty more majestic than strength; and there is truer sublimity in the sweet joy of a child, or the sweet virtue of a maiden, than in the strength of Antæus,[2] or thunder-clouds of Ætna.

Now, though in nearly all his greater pictures, Tintoret is entirely carried away by his sympathy with Michael Angelo, and conquers him in his own field;—outflies him in motion, outnumbers him in multitude, outwits him in fancy, and outflames him in rage,—he can be just as gentle as he is strong: and that Paradise, though it is the largest picture in the world, without any question, is also the thoughtfullest, and most precious.

The Thoughtfullest!—it would be saying but little, as far as Michael Angelo is concerned.

81. For consider of it yourselves. You have heard, from

[1] [See *Lectures on Art*, §§ 31, 103 (Vol. XX. pp. 46, 98).]
[2] [See *Mornings in Florence*, § 136.]

your youth up (and all educated persons have heard for three centuries), of this Last Judgment of his, as the most sublime picture in existence.[1]

The subject of it is one which should certainly be interesting to you, in one of two ways.

If you never expect to be judged for any of your own doings, and the tradition of the coming of Christ is to you as an idle tale—still, think what a wonderful tale it would be, were it well told. You are at liberty, disbelieving it, to range the fields—Elysian and Tartarean—of all imagination. You may play with it, since it is false; and what a play would it not be, well written? Do you think the tragedy, or the miracle play, or the infinitely Divina Commedia of the Judgment of the astonished living who were dead;—the undeceiving of the sight of every human soul, understanding in an instant all the shallow, and depth of past life and future,—face to face with both,—and with God:—this apocalypse to all intellect, and completion to all passion, this minute and individual drama of the perfected history of separate spirits, and of their finally accomplished affections!—think you, I say, all this was well told by mere heaps of dark bodies curled and convulsed in space, and fall as of a crowd from a scaffolding, in writhed concretions of muscular pain?

But take it the other way. Suppose you believe, be it never so dimly or feebly, in some kind of Judgment that is to be;—that you admit even the faint contingency of retribution, and can imagine, with vivacity enough to fear, that in this life, at all events, if not in another—there may be for you a Visitation of God, and a questioning—What hast thou done? The picture, if it is a good one, should have a deeper interest, surely on *this* postulate? Thrilling

[1] [Ruskin himself in his earlier writings, though he pointed out deficiencies in the work, yet attributed to it a very high place: see, for instance, *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. pp. 276, 281), and the "Review of Lord Lindsay," §§ 59, 60 (Vol. XII. p. 230). For other and later references to the "Last Judgment" of Michael Angelo, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 328); *Ariadne Florentina*, § 182; *Val d'Arno*, § 256; and *Mornings in Florence*, § 75 *n.*]

enough, as a mere imagination of what is never to be—now, as a conjecture of what *is* to be, held the best that in eighteen centuries of Christianity has for men's eyes been made;—Think of it so!

32. And then, tell me, whether you yourselves, or any one you have known, did ever at any time receive from this picture any, the smallest vital thought, warning, quickening, or help? It may have appalled, or impressed you for a time, as a thunder-cloud might: but has it ever taught you anything—chastised in you anything—confirmed a purpose—fortified a resistance—purified a passion? I know that, for you, it has done none of these things; and I know also that, for others, it has done very different things. In every vain and proud designer who has since lived, that dark carnality of Michael Angelo's has fostered insolent science, and fleshly imagination. Daubers and blockheads think themselves painters, and are received by the public as such, if they know how to foreshorten bones and decipher entrails; and men with capacity of art either shrink away (the best of them always do) into petty felicities and innocencies of genre painting—landscapes, cattle, family breakfasts, village schoolings, and the like; or else, if they have the full sensuous art-faculty that would have made true painters of them, being taught, from their youth up, to look for and learn the body instead of the spirit, have learned it, and taught it to such purpose, that at this hour, when I speak to you, the rooms of the Royal Academy of England, receiving also what of best can be sent there by the masters of France, contain *not one* picture honourable to the arts of their age;[1] and contain many which are shameful in their record of its manners.

33. Of that, hereafter.[2] I will close to-day giving you some brief account of the scheme of Tintoret's Paradise,

[1] [See Preface to *Aratra Pentelici*, § 3, and the note there added (Vol. XX. p. 195); and compare, below, p. 187.]

[2] [To the subject of "insolent science and fleshly imagination" and their relation to art, Ruskin returned in *The Eagle's Nest*, being "Ten Lectures on the Relation of Natural Science to Art."]

in justification of my assertion that it is the thoughtfullest as well as mightiest picture in the world.[1]

In the highest centre is Christ, leaning on the globe of the earth, which is of dark crystal. Christ is crowned with a glory as of the sun, and all the picture is lighted by that glory, descending through circle beneath circle of cloud, and of flying or throned spirits.

The Madonna, beneath Christ, and at some interval from Him, kneels to Him. She is crowned with the Seven stars, and kneels on a cloud of angels, whose wings change into ruby fire, where they are near her.

The three great Archangels, meeting from three sides, fly towards Christ. Michael delivers up his scales and sword. He is followed by the Thrones and Principalities of the Earth; so inscribed—Throni—Principatus. The Spirits of the Thrones bear scales in their hands; and of the Princedoms, shining globes: beneath the wings of the last of these are the four great teachers and lawgivers, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Gregory, St. Augustine, and behind St. Augustine stands his mother, watching him, her chief joy in Paradise.

Under the Thrones, are set the Apostles, St. Paul separated a little from the rest, and put lowest, yet principal; under St. Paul, is St. Christopher, bearing a massive globe, with a cross upon it; but to mark him as the Christ-bearer, since here in Paradise he cannot have the Child on his shoulders, Tintoret has thrown on the globe a flashing stellar reflection of the sun round the head of Christ.

All this side of the picture is kept in glowing colour, —the four Doctors of the Church have golden mitres and mantles; except the Cardinal, St. Jerome, who is in burning scarlet, his naked breast glowing, warm with noble

[1] [As already stated (Vol. X. p. 466), Tintoret's "Paradise" was in 1903 removed from its place in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio, owing to the discovery of lesions in the wall which sustained it. The canvas (which shows some injuries) is now (October 1905) exhibited in full light in the centre of the room, pending the completion of repairs in the Ducal Palace; this, therefore, is the photographer's opportunity, but it would be impossible on the scale of one of these pages to give any satisfactory reproduction of so huge a picture (72 ft. × 23 ft.). For another description of the picture by Ruskin, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. p. 372).]

life,—the darker red of his robe relieved against a white glory.

84. Opposite to Michael, Gabriel flies towards the Madonna, having in his hand the Annunciation lily, large, and triple-blossomed. Above him, and above Michael, equally, extends a cloud of white angels, inscribed "Serafini"; but the group following Gabriel, and corresponding to the Throni following Michael, is inscribed "Cherubini." Under these are the great prophets, and singers and foretellers of the happiness or of the sorrow of time. David, and Solomon, and Isaiah, and Amos of the herdsmen. David has a colossal golden psaltery laid horizontally across his knees;—two angels behind him dictate to him as he sings, looking up towards Christ; but one strong angel sweeps down to Solomon from among the cherubs, and opens a book, resting it on the head of Solomon, who looks down earnestly unconscious of it;—to the left of David, separate from the group of prophets, as Paul from the apostles, is Moses, dark-robed; in the full light, withdrawn far behind him, Abraham, embracing Isaac with his left arm, and near him, pale St. Agnes. In front, nearer, dark and colossal, stands the glorious figure of Santa Giustina of Padua; then a little subordinate to her, St. Catherine, and, far on the left, and high, St. Barbara leaning on her tower. In front, nearer, flies Raphael; and under him is the four-square group of the Evangelists. Beneath them, on the left, Noah; on the right, Adam and Eve, both floating unsupported by cloud or angel; Noah buoyed by the Ark, which he holds above him, and it is *this* into which Solomon gazes down, so earnestly. Eve's face is, perhaps, the most beautiful ever painted by Tintoret—full in light, but dark-eyed. Adam floats beside her, his figure fading into a winged gloom, edged in the outline of fig-leaves. Far down, under these, central in the lowest part of the picture, rises the Angel of the Sea, praying for Venice; for Tintoret conceives his Paradise as existing now, not as in the future. I at first mistook this soft Angel of the Sea for the Magdalen, for

he is sustained by other three angels on either side, as the Magdalen is, in designs of earlier time, because of the verse, "There is joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth."[1] But the Magdalen is on the right, behind St. Monica; and on the same side, but lowest of all, Rachel, among the angels of her children, gathered now again to her for ever.[2]

35. I have no hesitation in asserting this picture to be by far the most precious work of art of any kind whatsoever, now existing in the world; and it is, I believe, on the eve of final destruction; for it is said that the angle of the great council-chamber is soon to be rebuilt;[3] and

[1] [Luke xv. 10.]

[2] [Among Ruskin's MSS. at Brantwood is a foreign note-book in which Mrs. Severn wrote out at his dictation a more detailed inventory of the picture. This he used in writing the description in the text. A few additional notes are here given:—

Among the spirits of the Princedoms bearing shining globes, Ruskin notes "the last of them to the right with vast brown wings, one of the grandest figures in the picture."

Behind the wheel of St. Catherine he notes the figure of "a young priest, very lovely, holding a child with his right arm. The head seen close is curiously beautiful, though only Tintoret's outline and the upper part of the brow is left; the rest is partly canvas from which the paint is broken away, partly retouching but without covering Tintoret's work; note that retouching never does harm so that it joins only, without recovering."

"One of the most perfect pieces of slight painting is the adoring Saint in blue, with the Pope in a grey tiara, just under St. Jerome; the Saint lifting her hands clasped, touching St. Jerome's foot, the strong light next her head."

"The difficulty of detaching the near groups which causes the black edges throughout the picture is curiously shown in two places—the drapery round St. Paul's right hand having no sharp edge goes off like a hair-brush into St. Agatha behind, and the strong light on the child carrying St. Ambrose confuses that group with the head of the beautiful nun; these two, and the bishop who looks headless under Adam's limb, are almost the only instances of confusion in the picture."

"One of the things which chiefly interferes with the spectator understanding these darknesses is that Tintoret has always assumed that the picture is lighted from above."

"The picture is most delightful where the effect of light becomes unthought of—some of the confused pieces of gold or grey being more beautiful than of the strongly lighted figures, except only the supreme Adam and Eve. The two great flying angels of Solomon and St. Jerome, if they were cut out of the canvas, would be, I suppose, by all acknowledged to be the grandest flying figures in the world."]

[3] [This reconstruction, long delayed, has, since the fall of the Campanile, been taken in hand, and the work is now in progress (1905): see the note on p. 105.]

that process will involve the destruction of the picture by removal, and, far more, by repainting. I had thought of making some effort to save it by an appeal in London to persons generally interested in the arts; but the recent desolation of Paris has familiarized us with destruction, and I have no doubt the answer to me would be, that Venice must take care of her own. But remember, at least, that I have borne witness to you to-day of the treasures that we forget, while we amuse ourselves with the poor toys, and the petty or vile arts, of our own time.

The years of that time have perhaps come, when we are to be taught to look no more to the dreams of painters, either for knowledge of Judgment, or of Paradise. The anger of Heaven will not longer, I think, be mocked for our amusement; and perhaps its love may not always be despised by our pride. Believe me, all the arts, and all the treasures of men, are fulfilled and preserved to them only, so far as they have chosen first, with their hearts, not the curse of God, but His blessing. Our Earth is now encumbered with ruin, our Heaven is clouded by Death. May we not wisely judge ourselves in some things now, instead of amusing ourselves with the painting of judgments to come?

# APPENDIX

*(Added in this Edition)*

## PREFACE TO THE REV. R. ST. JOHN TYRWHITT'S "CHRISTIAN ART AND SYMBOLISM"[1]

(1872)

THE writer of this book has long been my friend, and in the early days of friendship was my disciple. But, of late, I have been his; for he has devoted himself earnestly to the study of forms of Christian Art which I have had little opportunity of examining, and has been animated in that study by a brightness of enthusiasm which has been long impossible to me.

Knowing this, and that he was able perfectly to fill what must otherwise have been a rudely bridged chasm in my teaching at Oxford, I begged him to give these lectures;[2] and to arrange them for press. And this he has done to please me; and now that it is done, I am—in one sense—anything but pleased: for I like his writing better than my own, and am more jealous of it than I thought it was in me to be of any good work—how much less of my friend's! I console myself by reflecting, or at least by repeating to myself, and endeavouring to think, that he could not have found all this out if I had not shown him the way. But most deeply and seriously I am thankful for such help, in a work far too great for my present strength;—help all the more precious, because my friend can bring to the investigation of early Christian Art, and its influences, the integrity and calmness of the faith in which it was wrought. Happier than I, in having been a personal comforter and helper of men, fulfilling his life in daily and unquestionable duty; while I have been, perhaps wrongly—always hesitatingly,—persuading myself that it was my duty to do the things that pleased me.

Also, it has been necessary to much of my analytical work that I should regard the Art of every nation as much as possible from their own

[1] [See the Prefatory Note, above, p. 76. The discussion of Michael Angelo is in ch. v. of Mr. Tyrwhitt's book (pp. 139–171). Ruskin quotes a passage from it in *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence* (Vol. XXII.). For other references to Mr. Tyrwhitt's, and to books of his containing contributions by Ruskin, see Vol. XV. pp. xxx., 6. This Preface was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 674–676 (§§ 545–548), and again in the second edition of that book, 1899, vol. ii. pp. 303–306 (§§ 254–257).]

[2] [The lectures were delivered during the winter of 1871–1872 at Winchester, Bradford, and Halifax.]

national point of view; and I have striven so earnestly to realize belief which I supposed to be false, and sentiment which was foreign to my temper, that at last I scarcely know how far I think with other people's minds, and see with any one's eyes but my own. Even the effort to recover my temporarily waived conviction occasionally fails; and what was once securest to me becomes theoretical, like the rest. But my old scholar has been protected by his definitely directed life, from the temptations of this speculative equity; and I believe his writings to contain the truest expression yet given in England of the feelings with which a Christian gentleman of sense and learning should regard the art produced, in ancient days, by the dawn of the faiths which still guide his conduct, and secure his peace.

On all the general principles of Art, Mr. Tyrwhitt and I are absolutely at one; but he has often the better of me by his acute personal knowledge of men and their ways. When we differ in our thoughts of things, it is because we know them on contrary sides; and often, his side is that most naturally seen, and which it is most desirable to see. There is one important matter, for instance, on which we are thus apparently at issue, and yet are not so in reality. These lectures show, throughout, the most beautiful and just reverence for Michael Angelo, and are of especial value in their account of him: while the last lecture on Sculpture, which I gave at Oxford, is entirely devoted to examining the modes in which his genius itself failed, and perverted that of other men. But Michael Angelo is great enough to make praise and blame alike necessary, and alike inadequate, in any true record of him. My friend sees him as a traveller sees from a distance some noble mountain range, obscure in golden clouds and purple shade; and I see him as a sullen miner would the same mountains, wandering among their precipices through chill of storm and snow, and discerning that their strength was perilous, and their substance sterile. Both of us see truly—both partially; the complete truth is in the witness of both.

The notices of Holbein, and of the English whom he painted, (see especially the sketch of Sir Thomas Wyatt in the sixth lecture[1]), are to my mind of singular value; and the tenor of the book throughout, as far as I can judge, for, as I said, much of it treats of subjects with which I am unfamiliar, so sound, and the feeling in it so warm and true, and true in the warmth of it, that it refreshes me like sight of the things themselves it speaks of. New and vivid sight of them it will give to many readers; and to all who will regard my commendation I commend it; asking those who have hitherto credited my teaching to read these lectures as they would my own; and trusting that others, who have doubted me, will see reason to put faith in my friend.

Pisa, *30th April*, 1872.

[1] [See pp. 202, 203 of Mr. Tyrwhitt's book.]

III

# THE EAGLE'S NEST

(1872)

# THE EAGLE'S NEST.

## TEN LECTURES

ON THE RELATION OF

## NATURAL SCIENCE TO ART,

GIVEN BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
IN LENT TERM, 1872.

BY

JOHN RUSKIN,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART

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[*Bibliographical Note.*—These lectures were delivered, under the title of "The Relation of Natural Science to Art," at Oxford in Lent Term, 1872; the titles of the several lectures as they stand in the list of contents were announced in the *University Gazette* of January 19; the dates were February 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, and March 2, 7, 9. Later in the year Ruskin published them under the title of *The Eagle's Nest.* Of that book there have been the following editions:—

*First Edition* (1872).—This was volume iv. in the collected "Works" Series. The general title-page reads:—

> The | Works of John Ruskin, | Honorary Student of Christchurch, Oxford. | Volume IV. | The Eagle's Nest. | [*Rose.*] | London: Printed for the Author | by Smith, Elder & Co., 15 Waterloo Place; | and sold by | Mr. G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent. | 1872.

The particular title-page was as shown here on the preceding leaf.

Octavo, pp. viii. + 232. Contents (here pp. 119, 120), pp. v., vi.; Preface (here pp. 121, 122), pp. vii., viii.; Text, pp. 1–22. Imprint (at the foot of the last page): "London: Printed by Smith, Elder and Co., Old Bailey, E.C." Headlines, on the left-hand pages, "The Eagle's Nest"; on the right-hand pages, the abbreviated titles of the several lectures.

Issued on September 16, 1872, in purple ("Ruskin") calf; lettered across the back, "Ruskin. | Works. | Vol. | IV. | The | Eagle's | Nest." 1000 copies. Price 9s. 6d., increased on January 1, 1874, to 18s.

*Second Edition* (1880).—The text was unaltered, but the volume had new title-pages. The general title-page reads:—

> The | Works of John Ruskin, | Honorary Student of Christchurch, Oxford. | Volume IV. | The Eagle's Nest. | [*Rose.*] | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1880.

The particular title-page reads:—

> The Eagle's Nest. | Ten Lectures | on the relation of | Natural Science to Art, | given before the University of Oxford, | in Lent Term, 1872. | By | John Ruskin, | Honorary Student of Christchurch, and Honorary Fellow of Corpus Christi | College, Oxford. | Second Thousand. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1880. | (*The Right of Translation is reserved*).

Imprint (at the foot of the last page): "Chiswick Press:—C. Whittingham, Took's Court, Chancery Lane."

Issued in October 1880 in purple calf, as before; price 18s. In July 1882 some copies were put up in mottled-grey paper boards, with white paper label on the back, which reads "Ruskin. | Works. | Vol. IV. | The | Eagle's | Nest." Price 13s.

*Third Edition* (1890).—The general title-page is the same down to "Kent," and then continues, "and | 8, Bell Yard, Temple Bar, London. | 1890." The particular title-page, after the title, etc., continues, "By | John Ruskin, LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christchurch, and Honorary Fellow of Corpus Christi | College, Oxford. | Third Edition. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent; | and | 8, Bell Yard, Temple Bar, London. | 1890. | [All rights reserved.]" At the foot of the reverse of the title-page, and at the foot of the last page, is the imprint: "Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury." Otherwise the edition is a reprint of the Second.

Issued in 1900 (500 copies), as before. In March 1893 copies were put up in green cloth, lettered on the back "Ruskin. | Vol. IV. | The | Eagle's Nest." Price 9s. 6d. cloth, 15s. calf; reduced in July 1900 to 7s. 6d. cloth, 14s. 6d. calf. This issue is still current.

*Small Edition* (1887).—The text remained unchanged. The title-page reads:—

> The Eagle's Nest. | Ten Lectures | on the Relation of | Natural Science to Art, | given before the University of Oxford, | in Lent Term, 1872. | By | John Ruskin, LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow | of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1887. | [*All rights reserved*].

Small crown 8vo, pp. x.+270. Preface, pp. v.–vii.; Contents, pp. ix., x.; Text, pp. 1–270. Imprint (at the foot of the reverse of the title-page, and of the last page): "Printed by Hazell, Watson, and Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury." Headlines as before.

Issued in June 1887, both in chocolate and in dark green coloured cloth, lettered across the back, "Ruskin. | The | Eagle's Nest." 2000 copies. Price 5s.

*Second Small Edition* (1891).—The text remained unchanged. The edition was called "Second Edition" (in fact it was the fifth) on the title-page, and the publisher's imprint was "George Allen | Sunnyside, Orpington | and | 8, Bell Yard, Temple Bar, London | 1891 | [*All rights reserved*]." The edition was printed by Messrs. Hazell & Co. Issued in February 1891 in the same form, and at the same price as before. 2000 copies.

*Third Small Edition* (1894).—The text remained unchanged, but an Index (by Mr. Wedderburn) was added, pp. 262–297. Called "Third Edition" on the title-page; the publisher's address now became "156 Charing Cross Road, London," and the edition was printed by Messrs. Ballantyne, Hanson & Co. Issued in May 1894 (2000 copies).

*Reissues of the Small Edition*, in the form last described, were made in June 1897 (called "Fourth Edition" on the title-page, 1000 copies); October 1899 ("Eleventh Thousand"); December 1900 ("Twelfth Thousand"); and June 1902 ("Thirteenth Thousand": this is still current; the price was reduced in January 1904 to 3s. 6d.).

*Pocket Edition* (1904).—This is uniform with other volumes in the same edition, already described (see Vol. XV. p. 6). The title-page is:—

The Eagle's Nest | By | John Ruskin | London: George Allen.

Printed from the same plates as the foregoing editions. Issued in June 1904 (3000 copies, making the "Sixteenth Thousand"). Reissued in October 1904 (2000 copies, making the "Eighteenth Thousand": still current).

*Unauthorised American Editions* have been numerous, in various forms and at various prices, from 50 cents upwards.

An *authorised American* ("Brantwood") *Edition* was issued in 1891 by Messrs. Charles E. Merrill & Co., New York, with an Introduction by Charles Eliot Norton (pp. v.–xiii.).

A German translation of the first five of the lectures was issued in 1902 with the following title-page:—

Das Adlerneſt. | [*Ornament*] | Fünf Vorleſungen | über die Beziehungen zwiſchen | Kunſt und Wiſſenſchaft | von | John Ruskin. | | Herausgegeben | von | Dr. S. Sänger. | [*Coat of Arms*] | Straßburg, | F. H. Ed. Heitz (Heitz und Mündel).

Crown 8vo, pp. viii. + 112. Translator's preface (explaining that the translation is not "slavishly literal"), pp. v., vi.; Contents, p. vii.; Text, pp. 1–112. Price 2 marks 50.

The book was not issued to the press, and no *reviews* appeared.

*Variæ Lectiones.*—In this edition an erroneous reference in § 7 has been omitted (see p. 127 *n.*); in § 23, line 11, "to-day for question" is here corrected to "for question to-day"; the Greek accents in § 78 have been corrected, also the quotation from Dante in § 79; in § 92, line 8, "Rue" has hitherto been printed "Reu"; in the heading to Lecture vii., the date is correctly given in the large editions, but is misprinted "February 9" in the small editions; in § 155, line 18, "could" is italicised in accordance with instructions in Ruskin's own copy, and similarly in § 207, line 1, "to you" is altered to "for you"; in § 201, line 6, the large editions print correctly "a mind to build it to," but the small editions misprint the last word "too."]

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# PREFACE

THE following Lectures have been written, not with less care, but with less pains, than any in former courses, because no labour could have rendered them exhaustive statements of their subjects, and I wished, therefore, to take from them every appearance of pretending to be so: but the assertions I have made are entirely deliberate, though their terms are unstudied; and the one which to the general reader will appear most startling, that the study of anatomy is destructive to art, is instantly necessary in explanation of the system adopted for the direction of my Oxford schools.

At the period when engraving might have become to art what printing became to literature, the four greatest point-draughtsmen hitherto known,[1] Mantegna, Sandro, Botticelli, Dürer, and Holbein, occupied themselves in the new industry. All these four men were as high in intellect and moral sentiment as in art-power; and if they had engraved

[1] [Among Ruskin's papers is some printed matter (apparently intended for a continuation of his "Instructions in Preliminary Exercises," see Vol. XXI. p. 264 *n.*), which refers to this passage:—

"In the preface to *The Eagle's Nest*, you will find I class two other men with Holbein and Botticelli,—Dürer, namely, and Mantegna; and that I call them the four greatest point-draughtsmen hitherto known. I must explain to you exactly this term, 'point-draughtsmen.' Up to the close of the fifteenth century, all painters of eminence wrought the delicate parts of their pictures exclusively with the point of their brush, so that the faces and flesh were, when you looked close, easily seen to be executed, just as a drawing or engraving is executed, by a number of crossing or parallel lines. But at the close of the fifteenth century, partly in indolence, partly in consummate skill, the great painters began to paint even the faces with the side or broadside of the brush, instead of the point, or with a flat brush that had no point; so that, plainly speaking, the faces are painted with a series of dabs or scrubs, instead of being drawn with lines. By dabbing and scrubbing the great masters do more, in a certain sense, than the old ones ever did by drawing. Velasquez and Tintoret, Vandyke and Gainsborough, Reynolds and Hogarth, all of them dab or scrub, never draw."]

as Giotto painted, with popular and unscientific simplicity, would have left an inexhaustible series of prints, delightful to the most innocent minds, and strengthening to the most noble.

But two of them, Mantegna and Dürer, were so polluted and paralyzed by the study of anatomy that the former's best works (the magnificent mythology of the Vices in the Louvre,[1] for instance) are entirely revolting to all women and children; while Dürer never could draw one beautiful female form or face; and, of his important plates, only four, the Melancholia, St. Jerome in his study, St. Hubert, and The Knight and Death, are of any use for popular instruction, because in these only, the figures being fully draped or armed, he was enabled to think and feel rightly, being delivered from the ghastly toil of bone-delineation.

Botticelli and Holbein studied the face first, and the limbs secondarily; and the works they have left are therefore (without exception) precious; yet saddened and corrupted by the influence which the contemporary masters of body-drawing exercised on them; and at last eclipsed by their false fame. I purpose, therefore, in my next course of lectures,[2] to explain the relation of these two draughtsmen to other masters of design, and of engraving.

BRANTWOOD, *Sept. 2nd*, 1872.

[1] [No. 1376: "Wisdom victorious over the Vices."]
[2] [*Ariadne Florentina:* see especially §§ 7, 141 (pp. 305, 390).]

# THE EAGLE'S NEST

## LECTURE I

### OF WISDOM AND FOLLY IN ART*

*8th February*, 1872

1. THE Lectures I have given hitherto, though, in the matter of them conscientiously addressed to my undergraduate pupils, yet were greatly modified in method by my feeling that this undergraduate class, to which I wished to speak, was indeed a somewhat imaginary one; and that, in truth, I was addressing a mixed audience, in greater part composed of the masters of the University, before whom it was my duty to lay down the principles on which I hoped to conduct, or prepare the way for the conduct of, these schools, rather than to enter on the immediate work of elementary teaching. But to-day, and henceforward most frequently, we are to be engaged in definite, and, I trust, continuous studies; and from this time forward, I address myself wholly to my undergraduate pupils; and wish only that my Lectures may be serviceable to them, and, as far as the subject may admit of it, interesting.

2. And, farther still, I must ask even my younger hearers to pardon me if I treat that subject in a somewhat narrow, and simple way. They have a great deal of hard work to do in other schools: in these, they must not think that I underrate their powers, if I endeavour to make everything

* The proper titles of these lectures, too long for page-headings, are given in the Contents.

as easy to them as possible. No study that is worth pursuing seriously can be pursued without effort; but we need never make the effort painful merely for the sake of preserving our dignity. Also, I shall make my Lectures shorter than heretofore. What I tell you I wish you to remember; and I do not think it possible for you to remember well much more than I can easily tell you in half-an-hour. I will promise that, at all events, you shall always be released so well within the hour, that you can keep any appointment accurately for the next. You will not think me indolent in doing this; for, in the first place, I can assure you, it sometimes takes me a week to think over what it does not take a minute to say: and, secondly, believe me, the least part of the work of any sound art-teacher must be his talking. Nay, most deeply also, it is to be wished that, with respect to the study which I have to bring before you to-day, in its relation to art, namely, natural philosophy, the teachers of it, up to this present century, had done less work in talking, and more in observing: and it would be well even for the men of this century, pre-eminent and accomplished as they are in accuracy of observation, if they had completely conquered the old habit of considering, with respect to any matter, rather what is to be said, than what is to be known.

3. You will, perhaps, readily admit this with respect to science; and believe my assertion of it with respect to art. You will feel the probable mischief, in both these domains of intellect, which must follow on the desire rather to talk than to know, and rather to talk than to do. But the third domain, into the midst of which, here, in Oxford, science and art seem to have thrust themselves hotly, like intrusive rocks, not without grim disturbance of the anciently fruitful plain;—your Kingdom or Princedom of Literature? Can we carry our statement into a third parallelism, for that? It is ill for Science, we say, when men desire to talk rather than to know; ill for Art, when they desire to talk rather than to do. Ill for Literature,

when they desire to talk,—is it? and rather than—what else? Perhaps you think that literature means nothing else than talking?—that the triple powers of science, art, and scholarship, mean simply the powers of knowing, doing, and saying. But that is not so in any wise. The faculty of saying or writing anything well, is an art, just as much as any other; and founded on a science as definite as any other. Professor Max Müller teaches you the science of language; and there are people who will tell you that the only art I can teach you myself, is the art of it.[1] But try your triple parallelism once more, briefly, and see if another idea will not occur to you. In science, you must not talk before you know. In art you must not talk before you do. In literature you must not talk before you—think.

That is your third Province. The Kingdom of Thought, or Conception.

And it is entirely desirable that you should define to yourselves the three great occupations of men in these following terms:—

SCIENCE. . . . The knowledge of things, whether Ideal or Substantial.

ART. . . . . The modification of Substantial things by our Substantial Power.

LITERATURE. . The modification of Ideal things by our Ideal Power.

4. But now observe. If this division be a just one, we ought to have a word for literature, with the "Letter" left out of it. It is true that, for the most part, the modification of ideal things by our ideal power is not complete till it is expressed; nor even to ourselves delightful, till it is communicated. To letter it and label it—to inscribe and to word it rightly,—this is a great task, and it is the part of literature which can be most distinctly

[1] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 97 (Vol. XVIII. p. 146), and *Ariadne Florentina*, § 2 (below, p. 302).]

taught. But it is only the formation of its body. And the soul of it can exist without the body; but not at all the body without the soul; for that is true no less of literature than of all else in us or of us—"litera occidit, spiritus autem vivificat."[1]

Nevertheless, I must be content to-day with our old word. We cannot say "spiriture" nor "animature," instead of literature; but you must not be content with the vulgar interpretation of the word. Remember always that you come to this University,—or, at least, your fathers came,—not to learn how to say things, but how to think them.

5. "How to think them! but that is only the art of logic," you perhaps would answer. No, again, not at all: logic is a method, not a power; and we have defined literature to be the modification of ideal things by ideal power, not by mechanical method. And you come to the University to get that power, or develop it; not to be taught the mere method of using it.

I say you come to the University for this; and perhaps some of you are much surprised to hear it! You did not know that you came to the University for any such purpose. Nay, perhaps you did not know that you had come to a University at all? You do not at this instant, some of you, I am well assured, know what a University means. Does it mean, for instance—can you answer me in a moment, whether it means—a place where everybody comes to learn something; or a place where somebody comes to learn everything? It means—or you are trying to make it mean—practically and at present, the first; but it means theoretically, and always, the last; a place where only certain persons come, to learn *everything;* that is to say, where those who wish to be able to think, come to learn to think: not to think of mathematics only, nor of morals, nor of surgery, nor chemistry, but of everything, rightly.

6. I say you do not all know this; and yet, whether you know it or not,—whether you desire it or not,—to

[1] [2 Corinthians iii. 6.]

some extent the everlasting fitness of the matter makes the facts conform to it. For we have at present, observe, schools of three kinds, in operation over the whole of England. We have—I name it first, though, I am sorry to say, it is last in influence—the body consisting of the Royal Academy, with the Institute of Architects, and the schools at Kensington, and their branches; teaching various styles of fine or mechanical art. We have, in the second place, the Royal Society, as a central body; and, as its satellites, separate companies of men devoted to each several science: investigating, classing, and describing facts with unwearied industry. And lastly and chiefly, we have the great Universities, with all their subordinate public schools, distinctively occupied in regulating,—as I think you will at once admit,—not the language merely, nor even the language principally, but the modes of philosophical and imaginative thought in which we desire that youth should be disciplined, and age informed and majestic. The methods of language, and its range; the possibilities of its beauty, and the necessities for its precision, are all dependent upon the range and dignity of the unspoken conceptions which it is the function of these great schools of literature to awaken, and to guide.

7. The range and dignity of *conceptions!* Let us pause a minute or two at these words, and be sure we accept them.

First, what *is* a conception? What is this separate object of our work, as scholars, distinguished from artists, and from men of science?

We shall discover this better by taking a simple instance of the three agencies.

Suppose that you were actually on the plain of Pæstum, watching the drift of storm-cloud which Turner has here engraved.[1] If you had occupied yourself chiefly in schools

[1] [See *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series*, No. 171 (Vol. XXI. p. 222, and Plate XLV.). Previous editions gave here a reference to "Educational Series, No. 8, E." (or 293 in the later numbering); but that example is a water-colour—of a storm-cloud, indeed, but not an engraving, nor of Pæstum.]

of science, you would think of the mode in which the electricity was collected; of the influence it had on the shape and motion of the cloud; of the force and duration of its flashes, and of other such material phenomena.[1] If you were an artist, you would be considering how it might be possible, with the means at your disposal, to obtain the brilliancy of the light, or the depth of the gloom. Finally, if you were a scholar, as distinguished from either of these, you would be occupied with the imagination of the state of the temple in former times; and as you watched the thunder-clouds drift past its columns, and the power of the God of the heavens put forth, as it seemed, in scorn of the departed power of the god who was thought by the heathen to shake the earth—the utterance of your mind would become, whether in actual words or not, such as that of the Psalmist:—"Clouds and darkness are round about Him—righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne."[2] Your thoughts would take that shape, of their own accord, and if they fell also into the language, still your essential scholarship would consist, not in your remembering the verse, still less in your knowing that "judgment" was a Latin word, and "throne" a Greek one; but in your having power enough of conception, and elevation enough of character, to understand the nature of justice, and be appalled before the majesty of dominion.

8. You come, therefore, to this University, I repeat once again, that you may learn how to form conceptions of proper range or grasp, and proper dignity, or worthiness. Keeping then the ideas of a separate school of art, and separate school of science, what have you to learn in these? You would learn in the school of art, the due range and dignity of deeds; or doings—(I prefer the word to "makings," as more general), and in the school of science, you would have to learn the range and dignity of knowledges.

[1] [Compare the passage on "the moral effect of a thunderstorm" in *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. p. 163).]

[2] [Psalms xcvii. 2: quoted also in *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 109).]

Now be quite clear about this: be sure whether you really agree with me or not.

You come to the School of Literature, I say, to learn the range and dignity of conceptions.

To the School of Art, to learn the range and dignity of deeds.

To the School of Science, to learn the range and dignity of knowledges.

Do you agree to that, or not? I will assume that you admit my triple division; but do you think, in opposition to me, that a school of science is still a school of science, whatever sort of knowledge it teaches; and a school of art still a school of art, whatever sort of deed it teaches; and a school of literature still a school of literature, whatever sort of notion it teaches?

Do you think that? for observe, my statement denies that. My statement is, that a school of literature teaches you to have one sort of conception, not another sort; a school of art to do a particular sort of deed, not another sort; a school of science to possess a particular sort of knowledge, not another sort.

9. I assume that you differ with me on this point;—some of you certainly will. Well then, let me go back a step. You will all go thus far with me, that—now taking the Greek words—the school of literature teaches you to have *νοῦς*, or conception of things, instead of *ἄνοια*,—no conception of things; that the school of art teaches you *τέχνη* of things, instead of *ἀτεχνία*; and the school of science *ἐπιστήμη*, instead of *ἄγνοια* or "ignorantia." But, you recollect, Aristotle names two other faculties with these three,—*φρόνησις*, namely, and *σοφία*. He has altogether five, *τέχνη*, *ἐπιστήμη*, *φρόνησις*, *σοφία*, *νοῦς*;[1] that is to say, in simplest English,—art, science, sense, wisdom, and wit. We have got our art, science, and wit, set over their three domains; and we old people send you young ones to those three schools, that you may not remain artless, scienceless, nor

[1] [*Ethics*, vi. 3, 1.]

witless. But how of the sense, and the wisdom? What domains belong to these? Do you think our trefoil division should become cinquefoil, and that we ought to have two additional schools; one of Philosophia, and one of Philophronesia? If Aristotle's division were right it would be so. But his division is wrong, and he presently shows it is; for he tells you in the next page, (in the sentence I have so often quoted to you,) that "the virtue of art is the wisdom which consists in the wit of what is honourable."[1] Now that is perfectly true; but it of course vitiates his division altogether. He divides his entire subject into *A*, *B*, *C*, *D*, and *E*; and then he tells you that the virtue of *A* is the *B* which consists in *C*. Now you will continually find, in this way, that Aristotle's assertions are right, but his divisions illogical. It is quite true that the virtue of art is the wisdom which consists in the wit of what is honourable; but also the virtue of science is the wit of what is honourable, and in the same sense, the virtue of νοῦς, or wit itself, consists in its *being* the wit or conception of what is honourable. Σοφία, therefore, is not only the ἀρετὴ τέχνης, but, in exactly the same sense, the ἀρετὴ ἐπιστήμης, and in this sense, it is the ἀρετὴ νόου. And if not governed by σοφία, each school will teach the vicious condition of its own special faculty. As σοφία is the ἀρετή of all three, so μωρία will be the κακία of all three.

10. Now in this, whether you agree with me or not, let me be at least sure you understand me. Σοφία, I say, is the virtue, μωρία is the vice, of all the three faculties of art, science, and literature. There is for each of them a negative and a positive side, as well as a zero. There is a nescience for zero in science—with wise science on one side, foolish science on the other: ἀτεχνία for zero in art, with wise art on one side, foolish art on the other; and ἄνοια for zero in νοῦς with wise νοῦς, on one side, foolish νοῦς on the other.

11. You will smile at that last expression, "foolish νοῦς."

[1] [See *ibid.*, vi. 7, 5; and compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 112 (Vol. XX. p. 276).]

Yet it is, of all foolish things, the commonest and deadliest. We continually complain of men, much more of women, for reasoning ill. But it does not matter how they reason, if they don't conceive basely. Not one person in a hundred is capable of seriously reasoning; the difference between man and man is in the quickness and quality, the accipitrine intensity, the olfactory choice, of his νοῦς. Does he hawk at game or carrion? What you choose to grasp with your mind is the question;—not how you handle it afterwards. What does it matter how you build, if you have bad bricks to build with; or how you reason, if every idea with which you begin is foul or false? And in general all fatal false reasoning proceeds from people's having some one false notion in their hearts, with which they are resolved that their reasoning *shall* comply.

But, for better illustration, I will now take my own special subject out of the three;—τέχνη. I have said that we have, for its zero, ἀτεχνία, or artlessness—in Latin, "inertia," opposed to "ars." Well, then, we have, from that zero, wise art on the one side, foolish art on the other; and the finer the art, the more it is capable of this living increase, or deadly defect. I will take, for example, first, a very simple art, then a finer one; but both of them arts with which most of you are thoroughly acquainted.

12. One of the simplest pieces of perfect art, which you are yourselves in the habit of practising, is the stroke of an oar given in true time. We have defined art to be the wise modification of matter by the body (substantial things by substantial power, § 8). With a good oar-stroke you displace a certain quantity of water in a wise way. Supposing you missed your stroke, and caught a crab, you would displace a certain quantity of water in a foolish way, not only ineffectually, but in a way the reverse of what you intended. The perfectness of the stroke implies not only absolutely accurate knowledge or science of the mode in which water resists the blade of an oar, but the having in past time met that resistance

repeatedly with greater and greater rightness of adaptation to the end proposed. That end being perfectly simple,—the advance of the boat as far as possible with a given expenditure of strength, you at once recognize the degree in which the art falls short of, or the artlessness negatives, your purpose. But your being "σοφός," as an oarsman, implies much more than this mere art founded on pure science. The fact of your being able to row in a beautiful manner depends on other things than the knowledge of the force of water, or the repeated practice of certain actions in resistance to it. It implies the practice of those actions under a resolved discipline of the body, involving regulation of the passions. It signifies submission to the authority, and amicable concurrence with the humours, of other persons; and so far as it is beautifully done at last, absolutely signifies therefore a moral and intellectual rightness, to the necessary extent influencing the character honourably and graciously. This is the sophia, or wit, of what is most honourable, which is concerned in rowing, without which it must become no rowing, or the reverse of rowing.

18. Let us next take example in an art which perhaps you will think (though I hope not) much inferior to rowing, but which is in reality a much higher art—dancing. I have just told you (§ 11) how to test the rank of arts—namely, by their corruptibility, as you judge of the fineness of organic substance. The moria,* or folly, of rowing, is only ridiculous, but the moria, or folly, of dancing, is much worse than ridiculous; and, therefore, you may know that its sophia, or wisdom, will be much more beautiful than the wisdom of rowing. Suppose, for instance, a minuet danced by two lovers, both highly bred, both of noble

* If the English reader will pronounce the o in this word as in fold, and in sophia as in sop, but accenting the o, not the i, I need not any more disturb my pages with Greek types.[1]

[1] [See, however, many subsequent sections (19, 20, 68, etc.) where Ruskin continued to use the Greek types. Now and again (§§ 25, 26) he remembered this note.]

character, and very much in love with each other. You would see, in that, an art of the most highly finished kind under the government of a sophia which dealt with the strongest passions, and most exquisite perceptions of beauty, possible to humanity.

14. For example of the contrary of these, in the same art, I cannot give you one more definite than that which I saw at, I think, the Gaiety Theatre—but it might have been at any London theatre now,—two years ago.

The supposed scene of the dance was Hell, which was painted in the background with its flames. The dancers were supposed to be demons, and wore black masks, with red tinsel for fiery eyes; the same red light was represented as coming out of their ears also. They began their dance by ascending through the stage on spring trap-doors, which threw them at once ten feet into the air; and its performance consisted in the expression of every kind of evil passion, in frantic excess.

15. You will not, I imagine, be at a loss to understand the sense in which the words sophia and moria are to be rightly used of these two methods of the same art. But those of you who are in the habit of accurate thinking will at once perceive that I have introduced a new element into my subject by taking an instance in a higher art. The folly of rowing consisted mainly in not being able to row; but this folly of dancing does not consist in not being able to dance, but in dancing well with evil purpose; and the better the dancing, the worse the result.

And now I am afraid I must tease you by asking your attention to what you may at first think a vain nicety in analysis, but the nicety is here essential, and I hope throughout this course of Lectures, not to be so troublesome to you again.

16. The mere negation of the power of art—the zero of it—you say, in rowing, is ridiculous. It is, of course, not less ridiculous in dancing. But what do you mean by ridiculous? You mean contemptible, so as to provoke

laughter. The contempt, in either case, is slight, in ordinary society; because, though a man may neither know how to row, or dance, he may know many other things. But suppose he lived where he could not know many other things? By a stormy sea-coast, where there could be no fresco-painting, in a poor country, where could be none of the fine arts connected with wealth, and in a simple, and primitive society, not yet reached by refinements of literature; but where good rowing was necessary for the support of life, and good dancing, one of the most vivid aids to domestic pleasure. You would then say that inability to row, or to dance, was far worse than ridiculous; that it marked a man for a good-for-nothing fellow, to be regarded with indignation, as well as contempt.

Now, remember, the inertia or zero of art always involves this kind of crime, or at least, pitiableness. The want of opportunity of learning takes away the moral guilt of artlessness; but the want of opportunity of learning such arts as are becoming in given circumstances, may indeed be no crime in an individual, but cannot be alleged in its defence by a nation. National ignorance of decent art is always criminal, unless in earliest conditions of society; and then it is brutal.

17. To that extent, therefore, culpably or otherwise, a kind of moria, or folly, is always indicated by the zero of art-power. But the true folly, or assuredly culpable folly, is in the exertion of our art-power in an evil direction. And here we need the finesse of distinction, which I am afraid will be provoking to you. Observe, first, and simply, that the possession of any art-power at all implies a sophia of *some* kind. These demon dancers, of whom I have just spoken, were earning their bread by severe and honest labour. The skill they possessed could not have been acquired but by great patience and resolute self-denial; and the very power with which they were able to express, with precision, states of evil passion, indicated that they had been brought up in a society which, in some measure, knew evil from

good, and which had, therefore, some measure of good in the midst of it. Nay, the farther probability is, that if you inquired into the life of these men, you would find that this demon dance had been invented by some one of them with a great imaginative power, and was performed by them not at all in preference of evil, but to meet the demand of a public whose admiration was capable of being excited only by violence of gesture, and vice of emotion.

18. In all cases, therefore, observe, where the opportunity of learning has been given, the existence of the art-power indicates sophia and its absence indicates moria. That great fact I endeavoured to express to you, two years since, in my third introductory Lecture.[1] In the present course I have to show you the action of the final, or higher sophia, which directs the skill of art to the best purposes; and of the final, or lower moria, which misdirects them to the worst. And the two points I shall endeavour to bring before you throughout will be these:—First, that the object of University teaching is to form your conceptions;—not to acquaint you with arts, nor sciences. It is to give you a notion of what is meant by smith's work, for instance;—but not to make you blacksmiths. It is to give you a notion of what is meant by medicine, but not to make you physicians. The proper academy for blacksmiths is a blacksmith's forge; the proper academy for physicians is an hospital.[2] Here you are to be taken away from the forge, out of the hospital, out of all special and limited labour and thought, into the "Universitas" of labour and thought, that you may in peace, in leisure, in calm of disinterested contemplation, be enabled to conceive rightly the laws of nature, and the destinies of Man.

19. Then the second thing I have to show you is that over these three kingdoms of imagination, art, and science, there reigns a virtue or faculty, which from all time, and

[1] [See *Lectures on Art*, §§ 66 *seq.* (Vol. XX. pp. 73 *seq.*).]

[2] [So in *Lectures on Art*, Ruskin says that "a youth is sent to our Universities not to be apprenticed to a trade," but "to be made a gentleman and a scholar" (p. 18. Vol. XX).]

by all great people, has been recognized as the appointed ruler and guide of every method of labour, or passion of soul; and the most glorious recompense of the toil, and crown of the ambition of man. "She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Lay fast hold upon her; let her not go; keep her, for she is thy life."[1]

Are not these, and the innumerable words like to these, which you remember as I read them, strange words, if Aristotle's statement respecting wisdom be true; that it never contemplates anything that can make men happy, "ἡ μὲν γὰρ σοφία οὐδὲν θεωρεῖ ἐξ ὧν ἔσται εὐδαίμων ἄνθρωπος"?[2]

When we next meet, therefore, I purpose to examine what it is which wisdom, by preference, contemplates; what choice she makes among the thoughts and sciences open to her, and to what purpose she employs whatever science she may possess.

And I will briefly tell you, beforehand, that the result of the inquiry will be, that instead of regarding none of the sources of happiness, she regards nothing else; that she measures all worthiness by pure felicity; that we are permitted to conceive her as the cause even of gladness to God—"I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him,"—and that we are commanded to *know* her as queen of the populous world, "rejoicing in the habitable parts of the Earth, and whose delights are with the sons of Men."[3]

[1] [Proverbs iii. 15, iv. 13; quoted also in *A Joy for Ever*, § 174, and *Time and Tide*, § 87 (Vol. XVI. p. 159, Vol. XVII. p. 394).]

[2] [*Ethics*, vi. 12, 1.]

[3] [Proverbs viii. 30, 31: quoted again in § 64 (below, p. 167), and also in *Unto this Last*, § 82, and *Ethics of the Dust*, § 23 (Vol. XVII. p. 111, Vol. XVIII. p. 232).]

# LECTURE II

## OF WISDOM AND FOLLY IN SCIENCE

*10th February*, 1872

20. In my last lecture I asserted the positive and negative powers of literature, art, and science; and endeavoured to show you some of the relations of wise art to foolish art. To-day we are to examine the nature of these positive and negative powers in science; it being the object of every true school to teach the positive or constructive power, and by all means to discourage, reprove, and extinguish the negative power.

It is very possible that you may not often have thought of, or clearly defined to yourselves, this destructive or deadly character of some elements of science. You may indeed have recognized with Pope that a little knowledge was dangerous, and you have therefore striven to drink deep;[1] you may have recognized with Bacon, that knowledge might partially become venomous;[2] and you may have sought, in modesty and sincerity, antidote to the inflating poison. But that there is a ruling spirit or σοφία, under whose authority you are placed, to determine for you, first the choice, and then the use of all knowledge whatsoever; and that if you do not appeal to that ruler, much more if you disobey her, all science becomes to you ruinous in proportion to its accumulation, and as a net to your soul, fatal in proportion to the fineness of its thread,—this, I imagine, few of you, in the zeal of learning, have suspected, and fewer still have pressed their suspicion so far as to recognize or believe.

[1] [*Essay on Criticism*, ii. 15.]
[2] [For this reference to Bacon, see Vol. XI. p. 67, and compare Vol. VII. p. 184.]

21. You must have nearly all heard of, many must have seen, the singular paintings—some also may have read the poems—of William Blake.[1] The impression that his drawings once made is fast, and justly, fading away, though they are not without noble merit. But his poems have much more than merit; they are written with absolute sincerity, with infinite tenderness, and, though in the manner of them diseased and wild, are in verity the words of a great and wise mind, disturbed, but not deceived, by its sickness; nay, partly exalted by it, and sometimes giving forth in fiery aphorism some of the most precious words of existing literature. One of these passages I will ask you to remember; it will often be serviceable to you—

> "Doth the Eagle know what is in the pit,
> Or wilt thou go ask the Mole?"[2]

It would be impossible to express to you in briefer terms the great truth that there is a different kind of knowledge good for every different creature, and that the glory of the higher creatures is in ignorance of what is known to the lower.

22. And, above all, this is true of man; for every other creature is compelled by its instinct to learn its own appointed lesson, and must centralize its perception in its own being. But man has the choice of stooping in science beneath himself, and striving in science beyond himself; and the "Know thyself"[3] is, for him, not a law to which he must in peace submit; but a precept which of all others is the most painful to understand, and the most difficult to fulfil. Most painful to understand, and humiliating; and this alike, whether it be held to refer to the knowledge beneath us, or above. For, singularly enough, men are always most conceited of the meanest science:—

> "Doth the Eagle know what is in the pit,
> Or wilt thou go ask the Mole?"

[1] [For Ruskin's earlier references to Blake, see Vol. XIX. p. 56 *n.*]
[2] [Lines prefixed to *The Book of Thel.*]
[3] [See *Ethics of the Dust*, § 58 (Vol. XVIII. p. 273).]

It is just those who grope with the mole, and cling with the bat, who are vainest of their sight and of their wings.[1]

28. "Know *thyself;*" but can it indeed be sophia,—can it be the noble wisdom, which thus speaks to science? Is not this rather, you will ask, the voice of the lower virtue of prudence, concerning itself with right conduct, whether for the interests of this world or of the future? Does not sophia regard all that is above and greater than man; and by so much as we are forbidden to bury ourselves in the mole's earth-heap, by so much also, are we not urged to raise ourselves towards the stars?

Indeed, it would at first seem so; nay, in the passage of the *Ethics*, which I proposed to you[2] for question to-day, you are distinctly told so. There are, it is said, many different kinds of phronesis, by which every animal recognizes what is for its own good: and man, like any other creature, has his own separate phronesis telling him what he is to seek, and to do, for the preservation of his life: but above all these forms of prudence, the Greek sage tells you, is the sophia of which the objects are unchangeable and eternal, the methods consistent, and the conclusions universal: and this wisdom has no regard whatever to the things in which the happiness of man consists, but acquaints itself only with the things that are most honourable; so that "we call Anaxagoras and Thales, and such others, wise indeed, but not prudent, in that they know nothing of what is for their own advantage, but know surpassing things, marvellous things, difficult things, and divine things."[3]

24. Now here is a question which evidently touches *us* closely. We profess at this day to be an especially prudent nation;—to regard only the things which are for our own advantage; to leave to other races the knowledge of surpassing things, marvellous things, divine things, or beautiful

[1] [With this passage compare *Proserpina*, i. ch. v.]
[2] [See above, § 19, p. 136.]
[3] [vi. 7, 5.]

things; and in our exceeding prudence we are, at this moment, refusing the purchase of, perhaps, the most interesting picture by Raphael in the world, and, certainly, one of the most beautiful works ever produced by the art-wisdom of man, for five-and-twenty thousand pounds,[1] while we are debating whether we shall not pay three hundred millions to the Americans, as a fine for selling a small frigate to Captain Semmes.[2] Let me reduce these sums from thousands of pounds, to single pounds; you will then see the facts more clearly; (there is not one person in a million who knows what a "million" means; and that is one reason the nation is always ready to let its ministers spend a million or two in cannon, if they can show they have saved twopence-halfpenny in tape). These are the facts then, stating pounds for thousands of pounds; you are offered a Nativity, by Raphael, for five-and-twenty pounds, and cannot afford it; but it is thought you may be bullied into paying three hundred thousand pounds, for having sold a ship to Captain Semmes. I do not say you will pay it. Still your present position is one of deprecation and humility, and that is the kind of result which you bring about by acting with what you call "practical common sense," instead of Divine wisdom.

[1] [The reference is to the "Madonna di Sant' Antonio," executed in 1507–1508 for the nuns of Sant' Antonio of Padua for their convent in Perugia—sometimes known as the "Colonna Raphael" and the "Ripalda Raphael" (from the names of successive owners). At the time when Ruskin wrote the picture was in the National Gallery on loan from the Duke of Ripalda, "on condition that it shall not be understood as implying any intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government to purchase the picture" (*National Gallery Report*, 1871, p. 2). The price originally asked had been £40,000, afterwards abated to the sum mentioned by Ruskin. He refers to the matter also in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 12. It should be added that artistic, as well as economic, objections were urged against its purchase; see, for instance, a letter in the *Times* of January 24, 1872, and an article in the *Athenæum* of March 2, 1872, which latter, "considering its injured and vitiated condition," was "at one with those in authority in considering it by no means a desirable addition to the National Gallery." The reader can now (1905) judge for himself, as the picture is once more in the National Gallery, on loan from its present owner, Mr. Pierpont Morgan, who is understood to have paid £100,000 for it. The Ansidei Madonna, it should be remembered, was not acquired for the Gallery till 1885.]

[2] [At the time when Ruskin spoke the huge "indirect claims" preferred by the United States on account of the privateer *Alabama* (under Captain Semmes) had been brought before the Geneva Tribunal of Arbitration; the Tribunal declared all such claims to be invalid, and they were withdrawn.]

25. Perhaps you think I am losing Aristotle's notion of common sense, by confusing it with our vulgar English one; and that selling ships or ammunition to people whom we have not courage to fight either for or against, would not by Aristotle have been held a phronetic, or prudent proceeding. Be it so; let us be certain then, if we can, what Aristotle does mean. Take the instance I gave you in the last lecture,[1] of the various modes of feeling in which a master of literature, of science, and of art, would severally regard the storm round the temples of Pæstum.

The man of science, we said, thought of the origin of the electricity; the artist of its light in the clouds, and the scholar, of its relation to the power of Zeus and Poseidon. There you have Episteme; Techne; and Nous; well, now what does Phronesis do?

Phronesis puts up his umbrella, and goes home as fast as he can. Aristotle's Phronesis at least does; having no regard for marvellous things.[2] But are you sure that Aristotle's Phronesis is indeed the right sort of Phronesis? May there not be a common-sense, as well as an art, and a science, under the command of sophia? Let us take an instance of a more subtle kind.

26. Suppose that two young ladies, (I assume in my present lectures, that none are present, and that we may say among ourselves what we like; and we do like, do we not, to suppose that young ladies excel us only in prudence, and not in wisdom?) let us suppose that two young ladies go to the observatory on a winter night, and that one is so anxious to look at the stars that she does not care whether she gives herself cold, or not; but the other is prudent, and takes care, and looks at the stars only as long as she can without catching cold. In Aristotle's mind the first young lady would properly deserve the name of Sophia, and the other that of Prudence. But in order to judge them fairly, we must assume that they are acting

[1] [See above, § 7, p. 127.]
[2] [See above, § 23, p. 139.]

under exactly the same conditions. Assume that they both equally desire to look at the stars; then, the fact that one of them stops when it would be dangerous to look longer, does not show that she is less wise,—less interested, that is to say, in surpassing and marvellous things;—but it shows that she has more self-command, and is able therefore to remember what the other does not think of. She is equally wise, and more sensible. But suppose that the two girls are originally different in disposition; and that the one, having much more imagination than the other, is more interested in these surpassing and marvellous things; so that the self-command, which is enough to stop the other, who cares little for the stars, is not enough to stop her who cares much for them;—you would say, then, that, both the girls being equally sensible, the one that caught cold was the wisest.

27. Let us make a farther supposition. Returning to our first condition, that both the girls desire equally to look at the stars; let us put it now that both have equal self-command, and would therefore, supposing no other motives were in their minds, together go on star-gazing, or together stop star-gazing; but that one of them has greater consideration for her friends than the other, and though she would not mind catching cold for her own part, would mind it much for fear of giving her mother trouble. She will leave the stars first, therefore; but should we be right now in saying that she was only more sensible than her companion, and not more wise? This respect for the feelings of others, this understanding of her duty towards others, is a much higher thing than the love of stars. It is an imaginative knowledge, not of balls of fire or differences of space, but of the feelings of living creatures, and of the forces of duty by which they justly move. This is a knowledge, or perception, therefore, of a thing more surpassing and marvellous than the stars themselves, and the grasp of it is reached by a higher sophia.

28. Will you have patience with me for one supposition more? We may assume the attraction of the spectacle of

the heavens to be equal in degree, and yet, in the minds of the two girls, it may be entirely different in kind. Supposing the one versed somewhat in abstract Science, and more or less acquainted with the laws by which what she now sees may be explained; she will probably take interest chiefly in questions of distance and magnitude, in varieties of orbit, and proportions of light. Supposing the other not versed in any science of this kind, but acquainted with the traditions attached by the religion of dead nations to the figures they discerned in the sky: she will care little for arithmetical or geometrical matters, but will probably receive a much deeper emotion, from witnessing in clearness what has been the amazement of so many eyes long closed; and recognizing the same lights, through the same darkness, with innocent shepherds and husbandmen, who knew only the risings and settings of the immeasurable vault, as its lights shone on their own fields or mountains; yet saw true miracle in them, thankful that none but the Supreme Ruler could bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion.[1] I need not surely tell you, that in this exertion of the intellect and the heart, there would be a far nobler sophia than any concerned with the analysis of matter, or the measurement of space.

29. I will not weary you longer with questions, but simply tell you, what you will find ultimately to be true, that sophia is the form of thought, which makes common sense unselfish,—knowledge unselfish,—art unselfish,—and wit and imagination unselfish. Of all these, by themselves, it is true that they are partly venomous; that, as knowledge puffeth up, so does prudence—so does art—so does wit; but, added to all these, wisdom, or (you may read it as an equivalent word), added to all these—charity, edifieth.[2]

30. Note the word; builds forward, or builds up, and

[1] [Job xxxviii. 31; compare *Queen of the Air*, § 26 (Vol. XIX. p. 321).]

[2] [1 Corinthians viii. 1. Ruskin's verses of 1842 (Vol. II. p. 212) may be compared :—

"When first He stretched the signèd zone,
And heaped the hills, and barred the sea,
Then Wisdom sat beside His throne;
But His own word was Charitie."]

builds securely because on modest and measured foundation, wide, though low, and in the natural and living rock.

Sophia is the faculty which recognizes in all things their bearing upon life, in the entire sum of life that we know, bestial and human; but, which, understanding the appointed objects of that life, concentrates its interest and its power on Humanity, as opposed on the one side to the Animalism which it must rule, and distinguished on the other side from the Divinity which rules it, and which it cannot imagine.

It is as little the part of a wise man to reflect much on the nature of beings above him, as of beings beneath him. It is immodest to suppose that he can conceive the one, and degrading to suppose that he should be busied with the other. To recognize his everlasting inferiority, and his everlasting greatness; to know himself, and his place; to be content to submit to God without understanding Him; and to rule the lower creation with sympathy and kindness, yet neither sharing the passion of the wild beast, nor imitating the science of the Insect;—this you will find is to be modest towards God, gentle to His creatures, and wise for himself.[1]

81. I think you will now be able to fasten in your minds, first the idea of unselfishness, and secondly, that of modesty, as component elements of sophia; and having obtained thus much, we will at once make use of our gain, by rendering more clear one or two points respecting its action on art, that we may then see more surely its obscurer function in science.

It is absolutely unselfish, we say, not in the sense of being without desire, or effort to gratify that desire; on the contrary, it longs intensely to see, or know the things it is rightly interested in. But it is not interested specially in itself. In the degree of his wisdom, an artist is unconcerned about his work as his own;—concerned about it only in the degree in which he would be, if it were another man's—recognizing its precise value, or no value, from that outer standpoint. I do not think, unless you examine your minds

[1] [This passage is quoted by Ruskin in his Preface of 1883 to the second volume of *Modern Painters:* see Vol. IV. p. 6 *n.*]

very attentively, that you can have any conception of the difficulty of doing this. Absolutely to do it is impossible, for we are all intended by nature to be a little unwise, and to derive more pleasure, therefore, from our own success than that of others. But the intense degree of the difference is usually unmeasured by us. In preparing the drawings for you to use as copies in these schools, my assistant and I are often sitting beside each other; and he is at work, usually, on the more important drawing of the two. I so far recognize that greater importance, when it exists, that if I had the power of determining which of us should succeed, and which fail, I should be wise enough to choose his success rather than my own. But the actual effect on my own mind, and comfort, is very different in the two cases. If *he* fails, I am sorry, but not mortified;—on the contrary, perhaps a little pleased. I tell him, indulgently, "he will do better another time," and go down with great contentment to my lunch. But, if *I* fail, though I would rather, for the sake of the two drawings, have had it so, the effect on my temper is very different. I say, philosophically, that it was better so—but I can't eat any lunch.

82. Now, just imagine what this inherently selfish passion—unconquerable as you will find it by the most deliberate and maintained efforts—fancy what it becomes, when instead of striving to subdue, we take every means in our power to increase and encourage it; and when all the circumstances around us concur in the deadly cultivation. In all base schools of Art, the craftsman is dependent for his bread on originality; that is to say, on finding in himself some fragment of isolated faculty, by which his work may be recognized as distinct from that of other men. We are ready enough to take delight in our little doings, without any such stimulus;—what must be the effect of the popular applause which continually suggests that the little thing we can separately do is as excellent as it is singular! and what the effect of the bribe, held out to us through the whole of life, to produce—it being also at our peril *not* to produce—something different from the work of our neighbours?

In all great schools of art these conditions are exactly reversed. An artist is praised in these, not for what is different in him from others, nor for solitary performance of singular work; but only for doing most strongly what all are endeavouring; and for contributing, in the measure of his strength, to some great achievement, to be completed by the unity of multitudes, and the sequence of ages.

38. And now, passing from art to science, the unselfishness of sophia[1] is shown by the value it therein attaches to every part of knowledge, new or old, in proportion to its real utility to mankind, or largeness of range in creation. The selfishness which renders sophia impossible, and enlarges the elastic and vaporous kingdom of folly, is shown by our caring for knowledge only so far as we have been concerned in its discovery, or are ourselves skilled and admired in its communication.[2] If there is an art which "puffeth up,"[3] even when we are surrounded by magnificence of achievement of past ages, confessedly not by us to be rivalled, how much more must there be a science which puffeth up, when, by the very condition of science, it must be an advance on the attainments of former time, and however slight, or however slow, is still always as the leaf of a pleasant spring compared to the dried branches of years gone by? And, for the double calamity of the age in which we live, it has chanced that the demand of the vulgar and the dull for originality in Art, is associated with the demand of a sensual economy for originality in science; and the praise which is too readily given always to discoveries that are new, is enhanced by the reward which rapidity of communication now ensures to discoveries that are profitable. What marvel if future time shall reproach us with having destroyed the labours, and betrayed the knowledge of the greatest nations and the wisest men, while

[1] [Here in one of his own copies Ruskin notes: "Unselfishness of σοφία = ἀγάπη against hatred; meekness of σοφία = humility against pride."]
[2] [On this subject compare Vol. XVI. p. 374.]
[3] [1 Corinthians viii. 1.]

we amused ourselves with fantasy in art, and with theory in science: happy, if the one was idle without being vicious, and the other mistaken without being mischievous. Nay, truth, and success, are often to us more deadly than error. Perhaps no progress more triumphant has been made in any science than that of Chemistry; but the practical fact which will remain for the contemplation of the future, is that we have lost the art of painting on glass, and invented gun-cotton and nitro-glycerine. "Can you imagine," the future will say, "those English fools of the nineteenth century, who went about putting up memorials of themselves in glass which they could not paint, and blowing their women and children to pieces with cartridges they would not fight with?"

84. You may well think, gentlemen, that I am unjust and prejudiced in such sayings;—you may imagine that when all our mischievous inventions have done their worst, and the wars they provoked by cowardice have been forgotten in dishonour, our great investigators will be remembered, as men who laid first the foundations of fruitful knowledge, and vindicated the majesty of inviolable law. No, gentlemen; it will not be so. In a little while, the discoveries of which we are now so proud will be familiar to all. The marvel of the future will not be that we should have discerned them, but that our predecessors were blind to them. We may be envied, but shall not be praised, for having been allowed first to perceive and proclaim what could be concealed no longer. But the misuse we made of our discoveries will be remembered against us, in eternal history; our ingenuity in the vindication, or the denial, of species, will be disregarded in the face of the fact that we destroyed, in civilized Europe, every rare bird and secluded flower; our chemistry of agriculture will be taunted with the memories of irremediable famine; and our mechanical contrivance will only make the age of the mitrailleuse more abhorred than that of the guillotine.

85. Yes, believe me, in spite of our political liberality,

and poetical philanthropy; in spite of our almshouses, hospitals, and Sunday-schools; in spite of our missionary endeavours to preach abroad what we cannot get believed at home; and in spite of our wars against slavery, indemnified by the presentation of ingenious bills,—we shall be remembered in history as the most cruel, and therefore the most unwise, generation of men that ever yet troubled the earth:—the most cruel in proportion to their sensibility,—the most unwise in proportion to their science. No people, understanding pain, ever inflicted so much: no people, understanding facts, ever acted on them so little. You execrate the name of Eccelin of Padua,[1] because he slew two thousand innocent persons to maintain his power; and Dante cries out against Pisa that she should be sunk in the sea, because, in revenge for treachery, she put to death, by the slow pangs of starvation, not the traitor only, but his children.[2] But we men of London, we of the modern Pisa, slew, a little while since, *five hundred* thousand men instead of *two* thousand—(I speak in official terms, and know my numbers)—these we slew, all guiltless; and these we slew, not for defence, nor for revenge, but most literally in *cold* blood; and these we slew, fathers and children together, by slow starvation—simply because, while we contentedly kill our own children in competition for places in the Civil Service,[3] we never ask, when once they have got the places, whether the Civil Service is done.

86. That was our missionary work in Orissa, some three or four years ago;[4]—our Christian miracle of the five loaves, assisted as we are in its performance, by steam-engines for the threshing of the corn, and by railroads for

[1] [See the note in *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 112 (Vol. XII. p. 137).]

[2] [*Inferno*, xxxiii. 79–87. For other references to the story of Ugolino, see *Poetry of Architecture*, § 146 (Vol. I. p. 115), and *Val d'Arno*, § 234.]

[3] [The principle of a stringent qualifying examination for the Civil Service had been instituted in 1855, and in 1870 open competition was established. For Ruskin's views on competitive examinations, see below, § 177, p. 243; and compare Vol. I. p. 384 *n.*]

[4] [The reference is to the famine in India in 1866: see the note on *Sesame and Lilies*, § 129 (Vol. XVIII. p. 176).]

carrying it, and by proposals from English noblemen to cut down all the trees in England, for better growing it.[1] That, I repeat, is what we did, a year or two ago; what are we doing now? Have any of you chanced to hear of the famine in Persia?[2] Here, with due science, we arrange the roses in our botanic garden, thoughtless of the country of the rose. With due art of horticulture, we prepare for our harvest of peaches;—it might perhaps seriously alarm us to hear, next autumn, of a coming famine of peaches. But the famine of all things, in the country of the peach —do you know of it, care for it:—quaint famine that it is, in the fruitfullest, fairest, richest of the estates of earth; from which the Magi brought their treasures to the feet of Christ?

How much of your time, scientific faculty, popular literature, has been given, since this year began, to ascertain what England can do for the great countries under her command, or for the nations that look to her for help; and how much to discuss the chances of a single impostor's getting a few thousands a year?

Gentlemen, if your literature, popular and other; or your art, popular and other; or your science, popular and other, is to be eagle-eyed, remember that question I to-day solemnly put to you—will you hawk at game or carrion?[3] Shall it be only said of the thoughts of the heart of England —"Wheresoever the *carcase* is, thither shall the eagles be gathered together"?[4]

[1] [The reference may be to the speech of Lord Derby, at a meeting of the Manchester and Liverpool Agricultural Society (*Times*, September 6, 1871), which is alluded to in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 10 (though at that time Ruskin says he had not read it; but see *ibid.*, Letter 45). In this speech Lord Derby, while conceding that "a moderate proportion of our little island might reasonably be preserved for purposes of beauty and enjoyment," regrets that more land is not brought under high farming.]

[2] [See the newspaper extract given in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 11.]

[3] [See above, § 11, p. 131.]

[4] [Matthew xxiv. 28. Ruskin quotes from memory; the verse reads "Wheresoever . . . , there will the eagles . . ."]

# LECTURE III

## THE RELATION OF WISE ART TO WISE SCIENCE

*"The morrow after St. Valentine's,"*[1] 1872

87. OUR task to-day is to examine the relation between art and science, each governed by sophia, and becoming capable, therefore, of consistent and definable relation to each other. Between foolish art and foolish science, there may indeed be all manner of reciprocal mischievous influence; but between wise art and wise science there is essential relation, for each other's help and dignity.

You observe, I hope, that I always use the term "science," merely as the equivalent of "knowledge." I take the Latin word, rather than the English, to mark that it is knowledge of constant things, not merely of passing events: but you had better lose even that distinction, and receive the word "scientia" as merely the equivalent of our English "knowledge," than fall into the opposite error of supposing that science means systematization or discovery. It is not the arrangement of new systems, nor the discovery of new facts, which constitutes a man of science; but the submission to an eternal system, and the proper grasp of facts already known.

88. And, at first, to-day, I use the word "art" only of that in which it is my special office to instruct you; graphic imitation; or, as it is commonly called, Fine art. Of course, the arts of construction,—building, carpentering, and the like, are directly dependent on many sciences, but in a manner which needs no discussion, so that we may put that

[1] [See the quotation from Chaucer in § 56; below, p. 161.]

part of the business out of our way. I mean by art, to-day, only imitative art; and by science, to-day, not the knowledge of general laws, but of existent facts. I do not mean by science, for instance, the knowledge that triangles with equal bases and between parallels, are equal, but the knowledge that the stars in Cassiopeia are in the form of a W.

Now, accepting the terms "science" and "art" under these limitations, wise art is only the reflex or shadow of wise science. Whatever it is really desirable and honourable to know, it is also desirable and honourable to know as completely and as long as possible; therefore, to present, or re-present, in the most constant manner; and to bring again and again, not only within the thoughts, but before the eyes; describing it, not with vague words, but distinct lines, and true colours, so as to approach always as nearly as may be to the likeness of the thing itself.

89. Can anything be more simple, more evidently or indisputably natural and right, than such connection of the two powers? That you should desire to know what you ought; what is worthy of your nature, and helpful to your life: to know that;—nothing less,—nothing more; and to keep record and definition of such knowledge near you, in the most vivid and explanatory form?

Nothing, surely, can be more simple than this; yet the sum of art judgment and of art practice is in this. You are to recognize, or know, beautiful and noble things—notable, notabilia, or nobilia;[1] and then you are to give the best possible account of them you can, either for the sake of others, or for the sake of your own forgetful or apathetic self, in the future.

Now as I gave you and asked you to remember without failing, an aphorism which embraced the law of wise knowledge,[2] so, to-day, I will ask you to remember, without fail, one, which absolutely defines the relation of wise art to it. I have, already, quoted our to-day's aphorism to you, at

[1] [On the word "noble," see *Time and Tide*, § 71 (Vol. XVII. p. 377).]
[2] [The lines from Blake quoted in § 21; above, p. 138.]

the end of my fourth lecture on sculpture.[1] Read the few sentences at the end of that lecture now, down to

"THE BEST, IN THIS KIND, ARE BUT SHADOWS."

That is Shakespeare's judgment of his own art. And by strange coincidence, he has put the words into the mouth of the hero whose shadow, or semblance in marble, is admittedly the most ideal and heroic we possess, of man; yet, I need not ask you, whether of the two, if it were granted you to see the statue by Phidias, or the hero Theseus himself, you would choose rather to see the carved stone, or the living King. Do you recollect how Shakespeare's Theseus concludes his sentence, spoken of the poor tradesmen's kindly offered art, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*?[2]

"The best in this kind are but shadows: and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them."

It will not burden your memories painfully, I hope, though it may not advance you materially in the class list, if you will learn this entire sentence by heart, being, as it is, a faultless and complete epitome of the laws of mimetic art.

40. "BUT SHADOWS!" Make them as beautiful as you can; use them only to enable you to remember and love what they are cast by. If ever you prefer the skill of them to the simplicity of the truth, or the pleasure of them to the power of the truth, you have fallen into that vice of folly, (whether you call her κακία or μωρία,) which concludes the subtle description of her given by Prodicus, that she might be seen continually εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῆς σκιὰν ἀποβλέπειν[3]—to look with love, and exclusive wonder, at *her own* shadow.

41. There is nothing that I tell you with more eager desire that you should believe—nothing with wider ground in my experience for requiring you to believe, than this,

[1] [*Aratra Pentelici*, § 142 (Vol. XX. p. 300); and compare below, pp. 221, 485.]
[2] [*Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. 1, 213. For other references to the so-called Theseus of the Parthenon (in the British Museum), see above, p. 95.]
[3] [Xenophon: *Memorabilia*, ii. 1, 22.]

that you never will love art well, till you love what she mirrors better.

It is the widest, as the clearest experience I have to give you; for the beginning of all my own right art work in life, (and it may not be unprofitable that I should tell you this,) depended not on my love of art, but of mountains and sea. All boys with any good in them are fond of boats, and of course I liked the mountains best when they had lakes at the bottom; and I used to walk always in the middle of the loosest gravel I could find in the roads of the midland counties, that I might hear, as I trod on it, something like the sound of the pebbles on sea-beach. No chance occurred for some time to develop what gift of drawing I had; but I would pass entire days in rambling on the Cumberland hill-sides, or staring at the lines of surf on a low sand; and when I was taken annually to the Water-colour Exhibition, I used to get hold of a catalogue before-hand, mark all the Robsons, which I knew would be of purple mountains, and all the Copley Fieldings, which I knew would be of lakes or sea; and then go deliberately round the room to these, for the sake, observe, not of the pictures, in any wise, but only of the things painted.

And through the whole of following life, whatever power of judgment I have obtained, in art, which I am now confident and happy in using, or communicating, has depended on my steady habit of always looking for the subject principally, and for the art, only as the means of expressing it.

42. At first, as in youth one is almost sure to be, I was led too far by my certainty of the rightness of this principle: and provoked into its exclusive assertion by the pertinacity with which other writers denied it: so that, in the first volume of *Modern Painters*, several passages occurred setting the subject or motive of the picture so much above the mode of its expression, that some of my more feebly gifted disciples supposed they were fulfilling my

wishes by choosing exactly the subjects for painting which they were least able to paint.[1] But the principle itself, I maintain, now in advanced life, with more reverence and firmness than in earliest youth: and though I believe that among the teachers who have opposed its assertion, there are few who enjoy the mere artifices of composition or dexterities of handling so much as I, the time which I have given to the investigation of these has only farther assured me that the pictures were noblest which compelled me to forget them.

43. Now, therefore, you see that on this simple theory, you have only to ask what will be the subjects of wise science; these also, will be, so far as they can be imitatively or suggestively represented, the subjects of wise art: and the wisdom of both the science and art will be recognized by their being lofty in their scope, but simple in their language; clear in fancy, but clearer in interpretation; severe in discernment, but delightful in display.

44. For example's sake, since we have just been listening to Shakespeare as a teacher of science and art, we will now examine him as a *subject* of science and art.

Suppose we have the existence and essence of Shakespeare to investigate, and give permanent account of; we shall see that, as the scope and bearing of the science become nobler, art becomes more helpful to it; and at last, in its highest range, even necessary to it; but still only as its minister.

We examine Shakespeare, first, with the science of chemistry, which informs us that Shakespeare consists of about seventy-five parts in the hundred of water, some twelve or fifteen of nitrogen, and the rest, lime, phosphorus, and essential earthy salts.

We next examine him by the science of anatomy, which tells us (with other such matters,) that Shakespeare has seven cervical, twelve dorsal, and five lumbar vertebræ; that his

[1] [Ruskin notices this misunderstanding of his teaching in *Sesame and Lilies*, § 106 (Vol. XVIII. p. 152): see the references there given.]

fore arm has a wide sphere of rotation; and that he differs from other animals of the ape species by being more delicately prehensile in the fingers, and less perfectly prehensile in the toes.

We next approach Shakespeare with the science of natural history, which tells us the colour of his eyes and hair, his habits of life, his temper, and his predilection for poaching.

There ends, as far as this subject is concerned, our possible science of substantial things. Then we take up our science of ideal things: first of passion, then of imagination; and we are told by these that Shakespeare is capable of certain emotions, and of mastering or commanding them in certain modes. Finally, we take up our science of theology, and ascertain that he is in relation, or in supposed relation, with such and such a Being, greater than himself.

45. Now, in all these successive stages of scientific description, we find art become powerful as an aid or record, in proportion to the importance of the inquiry. For chemistry, she can do scarcely anything: merely keep note of a colour, or of the form of a crystal. For anatomy, she can do somewhat more; and for natural history, almost all things: while in recording passion, and affectionate intellect, she walks hand in hand with the highest science; and to theology, can give nobler aid even than verbal expression of literature.

46. And in considering this power of hers, remember that the theology of art has only of late been thought deserving of attention: Lord Lindsay, some thirty years ago, was the first to recognize its importance; and when I entered upon the study of the schools of Tuscany in 1845, his "Christian Mythology"[1] was the only guide I could trust. Even as late as 1860, I had to vindicate the true position, in Christian science, of Luini, the despised pupil

[1] [The *Sketches of the History of Christian Art*; not published, however, till 1847. See on the subject of Ruskin's obligations to Lord Lindsay, Vol. XII. p. xxxix. n., and his review of the book, *ibid.*, pp. 169 *seq.*]

of Leonardo.[1] But only assuming, what with general assent I might assume, that Raphael's Dispute of the Sacrament—(or by its less frequently given, but true name—Raphael's Theologia,)[2] is the most perfect effort yet made by art to illustrate divine science, I am prepared hereafter[3] to show you that the most finished efforts of theologic literature, as compared with that piece of pictorial interpretation, have expressed less fully the condition of wise religious thought; and have been warped more dangerously into unwise religious speculation.

47. Upon these higher fields of inquiry we are not yet to enter. I shall endeavour for some time only to show you the function of modest art, as the handmaid of natural science; and the exponent, first of the beauty of the creatures subject to your own human life; and then of the history of that life in past time; of which one chief source of illustration is to be found in the most brilliant, and in its power on character, hitherto the most practieally effective of the arts—Heraldry.

In natural history, I at first intended to begin with the lower types of life;[4] but as the enlarged schools now give me the means of extending the use of our examples,[5] we will at once, for the sake of more general service, take up ornithology, of the uses of which, in general culture, I have one or two grave words to say.

[1] [The reference here is to the work done by Ruskin in 1861 in copying Luini's frescoes and reporting upon them to the Arundel Society (see Vol. XVIII. p. lxxiii.). His earliest printed reference to Luini was in 1865 (*Cestus of Aglaia*, § 54, Vol. XIX. p. 103). It is worth noting that in 1864 Wornum (*Epochs of Painting*, p. 193) referred to the reputation of Luini as "comparatively recent, owing partly to his omission by Vasari, or rather his being cursorily mentioned by the Florentine biographer as Bernardino da Lupino, and partly to the best of his works being attributed to Leonardo himself; as is the case, for instance, in our own National Collection, in which the 'Christ disputing with the Doctors,' bearing the name of Da Vinci, is, according to many critics, a work by Luini." In catalogues of the gallery as late as 1876 the picture was still ascribed to Leonardo. For another passage in which Ruskin refers to his vindication of Luini, see Vol. IV. p. 355 *n.*]

[2] [For other references to this painting in the Vatican, see Vol. XV. p. 166 *n.*]

[3] [To this Ruskin does not return, although in his lectures on *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence* (Vol. XXIII.) he describes the scheme of theology in Raphael's "Transfiguration," in preference, perhaps, to the "Disputa"; for which see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 182 (below, p. 422), and *Mornings in Florence*, § 75.]

[4] [As, for instance, with fishes; see *Lectures on Landscape*, § 1 (above, p. 12).]

[5] [On this subject, see Vol. XXI. pp. xix. *seq.*]

48. Perhaps you thought that in the beginning of my lecture to-day I too summarily dismissed the arts of construction and action.[1] But it was not in disrespect to them; and I must indeed ask you carefully to note one or two points respecting the arts of which an example is set us by birds;—building, and singing.

The other day, as I was calling on the ornithologist whose collection of birds is, I suppose, altogether unrivalled in Europe,—(at once a monument of unwearied love of science, and an example, in its treatment, of the most delicate and patient art)—Mr. Gould[2]—he showed me the nest of a common English bird; a nest which, notwithstanding his knowledge of the dexterous building of birds in all the world, was not without interest even to him, and was altogether amazing and delightful to me. It was a bullfinch's nest,[3] which had been set in the fork of a sapling tree, where it needed an extended foundation. And the bird had built this first story of her nest with withered stalks of clematis blossom; and with nothing else. These twigs it had interwoven lightly, leaving the branched heads all at the outside, producing an intricate Gothic boss of extreme grace and quaintness, apparently arranged both with triumphant pleasure in the art of basket-making, and with definite purpose of obtaining ornamental form.

49. I fear there is no occasion to tell you that the bird had no purpose of the kind. I say that I *fear* this, because I would much rather have to undeceive you in attributing too much intellect to the lower animals, than too little. But I suppose the only error which, in the present condition of natural history, you are likely to fall into, is that of supposing that a bullfinch is merely a mechanical arrangement of nervous fibre, covered with feathers by a

[1] [See § 38, p. 150.]

[2] [John Gould (1804–1881), F.R.S., published forty-one folios on birds, with 2999 illustrations; for references by Ruskin to them, see Vol. XXI. p. 226 and *Love's Meinie*, passim. Some of his collections of birds were bought for the British Museum (Natural History Branch); others were sold for America.]

[3] [For a reference to the following description, see Ruskin's notes (36) to Courthope's *Paradise of Birds*, in *Love's Meinie*, § 123.]

chronic cutaneous eruption; and impelled by a galvanic stimulus to the collection of clematis.

50. You would be in much greater, as well as in a more shameful, error, in supposing this, than if you attributed to the bullfinch the most deliberate rivalship with Mr. Street's prettiest Gothic designs. The bird has exactly the degree of emotion, the extent of science, and the command of art, which are necessary for its happiness; it had felt the clematis twigs to be lighter and tougher than any others within its reach, and probably found the forked branches of them convenient for reticulation. It had naturally placed these outside, because it wanted a smooth surface for the bottom of its nest; and the beauty of the result was much more dependent on the blossoms than the bird.

51. Nevertheless, I am sure that if you had seen the nest,—much more, if you had stood beside the architect at work upon it,—you would have greatly desired to express your admiration to her; and that if Wordsworth, or any other simple and kindly person, could even wish, for a little flower's sake,

> "That to this mountain daisy's self were known
> The beauty of its star-shaped shadow, thrown
> On the smooth surface of this naked stone,"[1]

much more you would have yearned to inform the bright little nest-builder of your sympathy; and to explain to her, on art principles, what a pretty thing she was making.

52. Does it never occur to you, then, that to some of the best and wisest artists among ourselves, it may not be always possible to explain what pretty things they are making; and that, perhaps, the very perfection of their art is in their knowing so little about it?

Whether it has occurred to you or not, I assure you

[1] [From a piece beginning "So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive": see *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 177), where also the lines are quoted.]

that it is so. The greatest artists, indeed, will condescend, occasionally, to be scientific;—will labour, somewhat systematically, about what they are doing, as vulgar persons do; and are privileged, also, to enjoy what they have made more than birds do; yet seldom, observe you, as being beautiful, but very much in the sort of feeling which we may fancy the bullfinch had also,—that the thing, whether pretty or ugly, could not have been better done;[1] that they could not have made it otherwise, and are thankful it is no worse. And, assuredly, they have nothing like the delight in their own work which it gives to other people.

53. But putting the special simplicities of good artists out of question, let me ask you, in the second place, whether it is not possible that the same sort of simplicity might be desirable in the whole race of mankind; and that we ought all to be doing human work which would appear better done to creatures much above us, than it does to ourselves. Why should not *our* nests be as interesting things to angels,[2] as bullfinches' nests are to us?

You will, probably, both smile at, and shrink from, such a supposition, as an insolent one. But to my thought, it seems, on the contrary, the only modest one. That *we* should be able to admire the work of angels seems to me the impertinent idea; not, at all, that they should be able to admire ours.

54. Under existing circumstances, I confess the difficulty. It cannot be imagined that either the back streets of our manufacturing towns, or the designs of our suburban villas, are things which the angels desire to look into;[3] but it seems to me an inevitable logical conclusion that if we are, indeed, the highest of the brute creation, we should, at

[1] [A reference to Dürer's saying, frequently quoted by Ruskin: see Vol. XIX. p. 52 *n.*]

[2] [Compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 189 (below, p. 428), and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 63.]

[3] [1 Peter i. 12. Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 63, where this passage is referred to.]

least, possess as much unconscious art as the lower brutes; and build nests which shall be, for ourselves, entirely convenient; and may, perhaps, in the eyes of superior beings, appear more beautiful than to our own.

55. "Which shall be, for ourselves, entirely *convenient*." Note the word;—becoming, decorous, harmonious, satisfying. We may not be able to build anything sublime; but, at all events, we should, like other flesh-invested creatures, be able to contrive what was decent, and it should be a human privilege to think that we may be admired in heaven for our contrivance.

I have some difficulty in proceeding with what I want to say, because I know you must partly think I am jesting with you. I feel indeed some disposition to smile myself; not because I jest, but in the sense of contrast between what, logically, it seems, ought to be and what we must confess, not jestingly, to be the facts. How great also,—how quaint, the confusion of sentiment in our minds, as to this matter! We continually talk of honouring God with our buildings; and yet, we dare not say, boldly, that, in His sight, we in the least expect to honour ourselves by them! And admitting, though I by no means feel disposed to admit, that here and there we may, at present, be honouring Him by work that is worthy of the nature He gave us, in how many places, think you, are we offending Him by work that is disgraceful to it?

56. Let me return, yet for an instant, to my bird and her nest. If not actually complacent and exultant in her architecture, we may at least imagine that she, and her mate, and the choir they join with, cannot but be complacent and exultant in their song. I gave you, in a former lecture,[1] the skylark as a type of mastership in music; and remembering—some of you, I suppose, are not likely soon to forget,—the saint to whom yesterday was dedicated, let me read to you to-day some of the prettiest

[1] [See *Lectures on Art*, § 67 (Vol. XX. p. 73).]

English words in which our natural feeling about such song is expressed.[1]

"And anone, as I the day espide,
No lenger would I in my bed abide,
But unto a wood that was fast by,
I went forth alone boldely,
And held the way downe by a brook side,

Till I came to a laund of white and green,
So faire one had I never in been,
The ground was green, ypoudred with daisie,
The floures and the greves like hie,
All greene and white, was nothing els seene.

There sat I downe among the faire flours,
And saw the birds trip out of hir bours,
There as they rested hem all the night,
They were so joyfull of the dayes light,
They began of May for to done honours.

They coud that service all by rote,
There was many a lovely note,
Some sang loud, as they had plained,
And some in other manner voice yfained,
And some all out with the full throte.

They proyned hem and made hem right gay,
And daunceden and lepten on the spray,
And evermore two and two in fere,
Right so as they had chosen hem to yere
In Feverere, upon saint Valentines day."

You recollect, perhaps, the dispute that follows between the cuckoo and the nightingale, and the promise which the sweet singer makes to Chaucer for rescuing her.

"And then came the Nightingale to me
And said Friend, forsooth I thanke thee
That thou hast liked me to rescue,
And one avow to Love make I now
That all this May I will thy singer be.

I thanked her, and was right well apaied,
Yea, quoth she, and be not thou dismaied,
Tho' thou have heard the cuckoo erst than me;
For, if I live, it shall amended be,
The next May, if I be not affraied."

[1] [*The Cuckow and the Nightingale.* For other notes on the birds of Chaucer, see *Munera Pulveris*, § 149 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 273 *n.*).]

"If I be not affraied." Would she not put the "if' more timidly now, in making the same promise to any of you, or in asking for the judgment between her and her enemy, which was to be passed, do you remember, on this very day of the year, so many years ago, and within eight miles of this very spot?

> "And this shall be without any Nay
> On the morrow after St. Valentine's day,
> Under a maple that is faire and green
> Before the chamber window of the Queen
> At Woodstoke, upon the greene lawn.
>
> She thanked them, and then her leave took
> And into an hawthorn by that broke.
> And there she sate, and sang upon that tree
> *'Terme of life love hath withheld me'*
> So loud, that I with that song awoke."

57. "Terme of life love hath withheld me!" Alas, how have we men reversed this song of the nightingale! so that our words must be "Terme of life—hatred hath withheld me."

This, then, was the old English science of the song of birds; and perhaps you are indignant with me for bringing any word of it back to you? You have, I doubt not, your new science of song, as of nest-building: and I am happy to think you could all explain to me, or at least you will be able to do so before you pass your natural science examination, how, by the accurate connection of a larynx with a bill, and by the action of heat, originally derived from the sun, upon the muscular fibre, an undulatory motion is produced in the larynx, and an opening and shutting one in the bill, which is accompanied, necessarily, by a piping sound.

58. I will not dispute your statement; still less do I wish to answer for the absolute truth of Chaucer's. You will find that the complete truth embraces great part of both; and that you may study, at your choice, in any singing bird, the action of universal heat on a marvellous mechanism, or of individual life, on a frame capable of

exquisite passion. But the point I wish you to consider is the relation to this lower creature's power, of your own human agencies in the production of sound, where you can best unite in its harmony.

59. I had occasion only the other day to wait for half-an-hour at the bottom of Ludgate Hill. Standing as much out of the way as I could, under the shadow of the rail-road bridge, I watched the faces, all eager, many anxious, and some intensely gloomy, of the hurried passers-by; and listened to the ceaseless crashing, whistling, and thundering sounds which mingled with the murmur of their steps and voices. And in the midst of the continuous roar, which differed only from that of the wildest sea in storm by its complexity and its discordance, I was wondering, if the sum of what all these people were doing, or trying to do, in the course of the day, could be made manifest, what it would come to.

60. The sum of it would be, I suppose, that they had all contrived to live through the day in that exceedingly unpleasant manner, and that nothing serious had occurred to prevent them from passing the following day likewise. Nay, I knew also that what appeared in their way of life painful to me, might be agreeable to them; and it chanced, indeed, a little while afterwards, that an active and prosperous man of business, speaking to one of my friends of the disappointment he had felt in a visit to Italy, remarked, especially, that he was not able to endure more than three days at Venice, because there was no noise there.

61. But, granting the contentment of the inhabitants of London in consistently producing these sounds, how shall we say this vocal and instrumental art of theirs may compare, in the scheme of Nature, with the vocal art of lower animals? We may indeed rank the danger-whistle of the engines on the bridge as an excruciating human improvement on that of the marmot; and the trampling of feet and grinding of wheels, as the human accentuation of the sounds produced by insects, by the friction of their wings

or thighs against their sides: but, even in this comparison, it may cause us some humiliation to note that the cicada and the cricket, when pleased to sing in their vibratory manner,[1] have leisure to rest in their delight; and that the flight of the firefly is silent. But how will the sounds we produce compare with the song of birds? This London is the principal nest of men in the world; and I was standing in the centre of it. In the shops of Fleet Street and Ludgate Hill, on each side of me, I do not doubt I could have bought any quantity of books for children, which by way of giving them religious, as opposed to secular, instruction, informed them that birds praised God in their songs. Now, though, on the one hand, you may be very certain that birds are not machines, on the other hand it is just as certain that they have not the smallest intention of praising God in their songs; and that we cannot prevent the religious education of our children more utterly than by beginning it in lies. But it might be expected of *ourselves* that we should do so, in the songs we send up from our principal nest! And although, under the dome at the top of Ludgate Hill, some attempt of the kind may be made every seventh day, by a limited number of persons, we may again reflect, with humiliation, that the birds, for better or worse, sing all, and every day; and I could not but ask myself, with momentarily increasing curiosity, as I endeavoured to trace the emotions and occupations of the persons who passed by me, in the expression of their faces—what would be the effect on them, if any creatures of higher order were suddenly to appear in the midst of them with any such message of peace, and invitation to rejoicing, as they had all been professing to commemorate at Christmas.

62. Perhaps you recollect, in the lectures given on landscape during the spring of this year,[2] my directing your

[1] [Compare *Queen of the Air*, § 54 (Vol. XIX. p. 353).]

[2] [Ruskin wrote the present lecture, it is clear, in the winter of 1871, and did not alter this date in delivering or printing them in 1872. The lectures on Landscape were delivered in the spring of 1871.]

attention to a picture of Mantegna's[1] in the loan exhibition, representing a flight of twelve angels in blue sky, singing that Christmas song. I ought to tell you, however, that one of our English artists of good position dissented from my opinion about the picture; and remarked that in England "we wanted good art, and not funny art." Whereas, to me, it is this vocal and architectural art of Ludgate Hill which appears funny art; and not Mantegna's. But I am compelled to admit that could Mantegna's picture have been realized, the result would, in the eyes of most men, have been funnier still. For suppose that over Ludgate Hill the sky had indeed suddenly become blue instead of black; and that a flight of twelve angels, "covered with silver wings, and their feathers with gold,"[2] had alighted on the cornice of the railroad bridge, as the doves alight on the cornices of St. Mark's at Venice; and had invited the eager men of business below, in the centre of a city confessedly the most prosperous in the world, to join them for five minutes in singing the first five verses of such a psalm as the 103rd—"Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and *all that is within me*," (the opportunity now being given for the expression of their most hidden feelings) "all that is within me, bless His holy name, and forget not all His benefits." Do you not even thus, in mere suggestion, feel shocked at the thought, and as if my now reading the words were profane? And cannot you fancy that the sensation of the crowd at so violent and strange an interruption of traffic, might be somewhat akin to that which I had occasion in my first lecture on sculpture to remind you of,—the feeling attributed by Goethe to Mephistopheles at the song of the angels: "Discord I hear, and intolerable jingling"?[3]

68. Nay, farther, if indeed none of the benefits bestowed

[1] [A slip of the pen for Botticelli's: No. 1034 in the National Gallery. See *Lectures on Landscape*, § 58 (above, p. 46).]

[2] [See Psalms lxviii. 13.]

[3] [See *Aratra Pentelici*, § 12 (Vol. XX. p. 208), where the passage is quoted.]

on, or accomplished by, the great city, were to be forgotten, and if search were made, throughout its confines, into the results of its wealth, might not the literal discord in the words themselves be greater than the felt discord in the sound of them?

I have here in my hand a cutting from a newspaper, which I took with me three years ago, to a meeting in the interest of social science, held in the rooms of the Society of Arts and under the presidency of the Prime Minister of England.[1] Under the (so called) "classical" paintings of Barry,[2] representing the philosophy and poetry of the ancients, Mr. Gladstone was in the chair; and in his presence a member of the Society for the Promotion of Social Science propounded and supported the statement, not irrelevant to our present inquiry, that the essential nature of man was that of a beast of prey. Though, at the time, (suddenly called upon by the author of *Tom Brown at Oxford*,) I feebly endeavoured to contradict that Socially Scientific person, I do not at present desire to do so. I have given you a creature of prey for comparison of knowledge. "Doth the eagle know what is in the pit?"—and in this great nest of ours in London, it would be well if to all our children the virtue of the creature of prey were fulfilled, and that, indeed, the stir and tumult of the city were "as the eagle stirreth up her nest and fluttereth over her young."[3] But the slip of paper I had then, and have now, in my hand,* contains information about the state of the nest, inconsistent with such similitude. I am not answerable for the juxtaposition of paragraphs in it. The first is a proposal for the building of a new church in

* *Pall Mall Gazette*, January 29th, 1869.[4]

[1] [For this meeting, and Ruskin's speech at it, see Vol. XVII. pp. 536 *seq.* The paintings by Barry, representing the progress of civilization, were executed in 1777–1783, in the large hall of the Society of Arts in the Adelphi.]

[2] [For Barry, see "Sir Joshua and Holbein," § 9 *n.* (Vol. XIX. p. 9).]

[3] [Deuteronomy xxxii. 11.]

[4] [The passages will be found on p. 7 of the issue. The proposal was to erect a memorial church at Oxford to the late Archbishop Longley.]

Oxford, at the cost of twenty thousand pounds; the second is the account of the inquest on a woman and her child who were starved to death in the Isle of Dogs. The bodies were found lying, without covering, on a bed made of heaped rags; and there was no furniture in the room but a wooden stool, on which lay a tract entitled "*The Goodness of God.*" The husband, who had been out of work for six months, went mad two days afterwards; and being refused entrance at the workhouse because it was "full of mad people," was carried off, the *Pall Mall Gazette* says not where.

64. Now, gentlemen, the question I wish to leave with you to-day is whether the Wisdom which rejoices in the habitable parts of the earth, and whose delights are with the sons of men,[1] can be supposed, under circumstances such as these, to delight herself in that most closely and increasingly inhabited portion of the globe which we ourselves now dwell on; and whether, if she cannot grant us to surpass the art of the swallow or the eagle, she may not require of us at least, to reach the level of their happiness. Or do you seriously think that, either in the life of Ludgate Hill, or death of the Isle of Dogs; in the art of Ludgate Hill, or idleness of the Isle of Dogs; and in the science and sanity of Ludgate Hill, or nescience and insanity of the Isle of Dogs, we have, as matters stand now, any clear encouragement to repeat, in that 103rd psalm, the three verses following the five I named; and to believe in our hearts, as we say with our lips, that we have yet, dwelling among us, unoffended, a God "who forgiveth all our iniquities, who healeth all our diseases; who redeemeth our life from destruction, who crowneth us with loving-kindness and tender mercies, and *who satisfieth our mouth with good things, so that our youth is* RENEWED LIKE THE EAGLE'S"?

[1] [Proverbs viii. 31; quoted also above, § 19, p. 136; and below, § 77, p. 178.]

# LECTURE IV

## THE POWER OF MODESTY IN SCIENCE AND ART

*17th February*, 1872

65. I BELIEVE, gentlemen, that some of you must have been surprised, — and, if I succeeded in making my last lecture clearly intelligible, many ought to have been surprised,—at the limitations I asked you to admit with respect to the idea of science, and the position which I asked you to assign to it. We are so much, by the chances of our time, accustomed to think of science as a process of discovery, that I am sure some of you must have been gravely disconcerted by my requesting, and will to-day be more disconcerted by my firmly recommending, you to use the word, and reserve the thought, of science, for the acquaintance with things long since discovered, and established as true. We have the misfortune to live in an epoch of transition from irrational dulness to irrational excitement; and while once it was the highest courage of science to question anything, it is now an agony to her to leave anything unquestioned. So that, unawares, we come to measure the dignity of a scientific person by the newness of his assertions, and the dexterity of his methods in debate; entirely forgetting that science cannot become perfect, as an occupation of intellect, while anything remains to be discovered; nor wholesome as an instrument of education, while anything is permitted to be debated.

66. It appears, doubtless, a vain idea to you that an end should ever be put to discovery; but remember, such impossibility merely signifies that mortal science must remain imperfect. Nevertheless, in many directions, the limit to practically useful discovery is rapidly being approached;

and you, as students, would do well to suppose that it has been already attained. To take the science of ornithology, for instance: I suppose you would have very little hope of shooting a bird in England, which should be strange to any master of the science, or of shooting one anywhere, which would not fall under some species already described. And although at the risk of life, and by the devotion of many years to observation, some of you might hope to bring home to our museum a titmouse with a spot on its tail which had never before been seen, I strongly advise you not to allow your studies to be disturbed by so dazzling a hope, nor your life exclusively devoted even to so important an object. In astronomy, the fields of the sky have not yet, indeed, been ransacked by the most costly instruments; and it may be in store for some of you to announce the existence, or even to analyse the materials, of some luminous point which may be seen two or three times in the course of a century, by any one who will journey to India for the purpose; and, when there, is favoured by the weather. But, for all practical purposes, the stars already named and numbered are as many as we require to hear of; and if you thoroughly know the visible motions, and clearly conceive the known relations, even of those which can be seen by the naked eye, you will have as much astronomy as is necessary, either for the occupation of thought or the direction of navigation.

67. But, if you were discontented with the limit I proposed for your sciences, much more, I imagine, you were doubtful of the ranks I assigned to them. It is not, I know, in your modern system, the general practice to put chemistry, the science of atoms, lowest, and theology, the science of Deity, highest: nay, many of us have ceased to think of theology as a science at all, but rather as a speculative pursuit, in subject, separate from science; and in temper, opposed to her.

Yet it can scarcely be necessary for me to point out to you, in so many terms, that what we call theology, if

true, is a science; and if false, is not theology; or that the distinction even between natural science and theology is illogical: for you might distinguish indeed between natural and unnatural science, but not between natural and spiritual, unless you had determined first that a spirit had no nature. You will find the facts to be, that entirely true knowledge is both possible and necessary—first of facts relating to matter, and then of the forces and passions that act on or in matter;—that, of all these forces, the noblest we can know is the energy which either imagines, or perceives, the existence of a living power greater than its own; and that the study of the relations which exist between this energy, and the resultant action of men, are as much subjects of pure science as the curve of a projectile. The effect, for instance, upon your temper, intellect, and conduct during the day, of your going to chapel with or without belief in the efficacy of prayer, is just as much a subject of definite science, as the effect of your breakfast on the coats of your stomach. Which is the higher knowledge, I have, with confidence, told you; and am not afraid of any test to which you may submit my assertion.

68. Assuming such limitation, then, and such rank, for our knowledge; assuming, also, what I have now, perhaps to your weariness, told you, that graphic art is the shadow, or image, of knowledge,—I wish to point out to you to-day the function, with respect to both, of the virtue called by the Greeks "σωφροσύνη," "safeness of mind," corresponding to the "salus" or "sanitas" mentis, of the Latins; "health of heart" is, perhaps, the best English; if we receive the words "mens," "μῆνις," or "φρήν," as expressing the passionate soul of the human being, distinguished from the intellectual; the "mens sana"[1] being possible to all of us, though the contemplative range of height her wisdom may be above our capacities; so that to each of us Heaven only permits the ambition of being σοφός, but commands the resolution to be σώφρων.

[1] [See Juvenal, x. 356.]

69. And, without discussing the use of the word by different writers, I will tell you that the clearest and safest idea of the mental state itself is to be gained from the representations of it by the words of ancient Christian religion, and even from what you may think its superstitions. Without any discussion also as to the personal existence or traditional character of evil spirits, you will find it a practical fact, that external temptations and inevitable trials of temper, have power against you which your health and virtue depend on your resisting; that, if not resisted, the evil energy of them will pass into your own heart, φρήν, or μῆνις; and that the ordinary and vulgarized phrase "the Devil, or betraying Spirit, is *in him*" is the most scientifically accurate which you can apply to any person so influenced.[1] You will find also that, in the compass of literature, the casting out of, or cleansing from, such a state is best symbolized for you by the image of one who had been wandering wild and naked *among tombs*, sitting still, clothed, and in his right mind,[2] and that in whatever literal or figurative sense you receive the Biblical statement of what followed, this is absolutely certain, that the herd of swine hastening to their destruction, in perfect sympathy with each other's fury, is the most accurate symbol ever given, in literature, of consummate human ἀφροσύνη.

. . . . . .

(The conditions of insanity,* delighting in scenes of death, which affect at the present time the arts of revolutionary Europe, were illustrated in the sequel of this lecture: but I neither choose to take any permanent notice of the examples I referred to, nor to publish any part of what I said, until I can enter more perfectly into the analysis of the elements of evil passion which always distorted and polluted

* I use this word always meaning it to be understood literally, and in its full force.

[1] [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 51 (Vol. XVII. p. 361); and *Ariadne Florentina*, § 254 (below, p. 482).]

[2] [Mark v. 2 *seq.*; Luke viii. 26 *seq.*]

even the highest arts of Greek and Christian loyal religion; and now occupy in deadly entireness, the chambers of imagination, devastated, and left desolate of joy, by impiety, and disobedience.

In relation to the gloom of grey colour characteristic especially of the modern French revolutionary school,[1] I entered into some examination of the conditions of real temperance and reserve in colour, showing that it consisted not in refusing colour, but in governing it; and that the most pure and bright colours might be thus perfectly governed, while the most dull were probably also the most violent and intemperate. But it would be useless to print this part of the lecture without the colour-illustrations used.

Passing to the consideration of intemperance and immodesty in the choice even of landscape subjects, I referred thus for contrast, to the quietude of Turner's "Greta and Tees."[2])

70. If you wish to feel the reserve of this drawing, look, first, into the shops at their display of common chromolithotints; see how they are made up of Matterhorns, Monte Rosas, blue glaciers, green lakes, white towers, magnificent banditti, romantic peasantry, or always-successful sportsmen or fishermen in Highland costume; and then see what Turner is content with. No Matterhorns are needful, or even particularly pleasing to him. A bank, some eight or ten feet high, of Yorkshire shale is enough. He would not thank you for giving him all the giant forests of California:—would not be so much interested in them nor half so happy among them, as he is here with a switch of oak sapling, which the Greta has pulled down among the stones, and teased awhile, and which, now that the water is lower, tries to get up again, out of its way.

He does not want any towers or towns. Here you are to be contented with three square windows of a country gentleman's house. He does not want resplendent banditti.

[1] [Compare below, p. 202.]
[2] [Standard Series, No. 2: see Vol. XXI. p. 11, and Plate XXV.]

Behold! here is a brown cow and a white one: what would you have more? And this scarcely-falling rapid of the Tees—here pausing to circle round a pool, and there laughing as it trips over a ledge of rock, six or seven inches high, is more to him—infinitely more—than would be the whole colossal drainage of Lake Erie into Lake Ontario, which Carlyle has justly taken for a type of the Niagara of our national precipitous *ἀφροσύνη*.[1]

71. I need not point out to you the true temperance of colour in this drawing—how slightly green the trees are, how softly blue the sky.

Now I put a chromo-lithotint beside it.

Well, why is that good, this bad? Simply because if you think, and work, and discipline yourselves nobly, you will come to like the Greta and Tees; if not, you will come to like *this*. The one is what a strong man likes; the other what a weak one likes: that is modest, full of true *αἰδὼς*,[2] noble restraint, noble reverence;—this has no *αἰδὼς*, no fear, no measure;—not even purpose, except, by accumulation of whatever it can see or snatch, to move the vile apathy of the public *ἀφροσύνη* into sensation.

72. The apathy of *ἀφροσύνη*—note the expression! You might think that it was *σωφροσύνη*, which was apathetic, and that intemperance was full of passion. No; the exact contrary is the fact. It is death in ourselves which seeks the exaggerated external stimulus. I must return for a moment to the art of modern France.

The most complete rest and refreshment I can get, when I am overworked, in London (for if I try to rest in the fields, I find them turned into villas in the course of the week before) is in seeing a French play. But the French act so perfectly that I am obliged to make sure beforehand that all is to end well, or it is as bad as being helplessly present at some real misery.

[1] ["Shooting Niagara: and After?" first published in *Macmillan's Magazine* for August 1867; now included in the seventh volume of the *Miscellanies*.]

[2] [On this word, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 9.]

I was beguiled the other day, by seeing it announced as a "Comédie," into going to see "Frou-Frou."[1] Most of you probably know that the three first of its five acts *are* comedy, or at least playful drama, and that it plunges down, in the two last, to the sorrowfullest catastrophe of all conceivable—though too frequent in daily life—in which irretrievable grief is brought about by the passion of a moment, and the ruin of all that she loves, caused by the heroic error of an entirely good and unselfish person. The sight of it made me thoroughly ill, and I was not myself again for a week.

But, some time afterwards, I was speaking of it to a lady who knew French character well; and asked her how it was possible for a people so quick in feeling to endure the action before them of a sorrow so poignant. She said, "It is because they have not sympathy enough: they are interested only by the external scene, and are, in truth, at present, dull, not quick in feeling. My own French maid went the other evening to see that very play: when she came home, and I asked her what she thought of it, she said 'it was charming, and she had amused herself immensely.' 'Amused! but is not the story very sad?' 'Oh, yes, mademoiselle, it is bien triste, but it is charming; and then, how pretty Frou-Frou looks in her silk dress!'"

73. Gentlemen, the French maid's mode of regarding the tragedy is, if you think of it, a most true image of the way in which fashionable society regards the world-suffering, in the midst of which, so long as it can amuse itself, all seems to it well. If the ball-room is bright, and the dresses pretty, what matter how much horror is beneath or around?[2] Nay, this apathy checks us in our highest spheres of thought, and chills our most solemn

[1] ["At French play last night," wrote Ruskin in his diary (January 26, 1872), "saw the dreadful Frou-Frou (the best view of Venice I ever saw on the stage). Gives me much to think of." And again (January 28), "Yesterday wretched all day from memory of French play."]

[2] [Compare Vol. V. p. 213, where Ruskin quotes to the like effect "Casimir de la Vigne's terrible ballad, 'La Toilette de Constance.'"]

purposes. You know that I never join in the common outcries against Ritualism; yet it is too painfully manifest to me that the English Church itself has withdrawn her eyes from the tragedy of all churches, to perk herself up anew with casement and vestment, and say of herself, complacently, in her sacred ποικιλία,[1] "How pretty Frou-Frou is, in her silk dress!"

74. We recognize, however, without difficulty, the peril of insatiableness and immodesty in the pleasures of Art. Less recognized, but therefore more perilous, the insatiableness and immodesty of Science tempt us through our very virtues. The fatallest furies of scientific ἀφροσύνη are consistent with the most noble powers of self-restraint and self-sacrifice. It is not the lower passions, but the loftier hopes and most honourable desires which become deadliest when the charm of them is exalted by the vanity of science. The patience of the wisest of Greek heroes never fails, when the trial is by danger or pain; but do you recollect that, before his trial by the song of the Sirens, the sea becomes calm?[2] And in the few words which Homer has told you of their song, you have not perhaps yet with enough care observed that the form of temptation is precisely that to which a man victorious over every fleshly trial would be likely to yield. The promise is not that his body shall be gratified, but that his soul shall rise into rapture; he is not urged, as by the subtlety of Comus,[3] to disdain the precepts of wisdom, but invited, on the contrary, to learn,—as you are all now invited by the ἀφροσύνη of your age,—better wisdom from the wise.

"For we know all" (they say) "that was done in Troy according to the will of the gods, and we know everything that is upon the all-nourishing earth."[4]

[1] [On this word, see Vol. XX. p. 349 *n.*]
[2] [*Odyssey*, xii. 168. For another reference to the Song of the Sirens, see *Munera Pulveris*, § 92 (Vol. XVII. p. 214).]
[3] [See Milton's *Comus*, 706 *seq.*]
[4] [*Odyssey*, xii. 189–191.]

All heavenly and earthly knowledge, you see. I will read you Pope's expansion of the verses; for Pope never alters idly, but always illustrates when he expands.[1]

"Oh stay, oh pride of Greece!

(You hear, they begin by flattery.)

Ulysses, stay,
Oh cease thy course, and listen to our lay.
Blest is the man ordained our voice to hear,
The song instructs the soul, and charms the ear.
Approach! Thy soul shall into raptures rise;
Approach! and learn new wisdom from the wise.
We know whate'er the kings of mighty name
Achieved at Ilion in the field of Fame,
Whate'er beneath the Sun's bright journey lies.
Oh, stay, and learn new wisdom from the wise."

Is it not singular that so long ago the danger of this novelty of wisdom should have been completely discerned? Is it not stranger still that three thousand years have passed by, and we have not yet been able to learn the lesson, but are still eager to add to our knowledge, rather than to use it; and every day more passionate in discovering,—more violent in competition,—are every day more cold in admiration, and more dull in reverence?

75. But, gentlemen, Homer's Ulysses, bound to the mast, survives. Dante's Ulysses is bound to the mast in another fashion. He, notwithstanding the protection of Athena, and after all his victories over fate, is still restless under the temptation to seek new wisdom. He goes forth past the Pillars of Hercules, cheers his crew amidst the uncompassed solitudes of the Atlantic, and perishes in sudden Charybdis of the infinite sea. In hell, the restless

[1] [See, however, *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 207), and a letter to the *Critic*, October 27, 1860, reprinted from *Arrows of the Chace*, ii. 245 (in a later volume of this edition), in both of which places Ruskin takes a less favourable view of expansions by Pope. See also *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 86 (ed. 1884).]

flame in which he is wrapt continually, among the advisers of evil, is seen, from the rocks above, like the firefly's flitting to and fro; and the waving garment of torture, which quivers as he speaks, and aspires as he moves, condemns him to be led in eternal temptation, and to be delivered from evil nevermore.[1]

[1] [*Inferno*, xxvi. 94–99: compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 93 (Vol. XVII. p. 214).]

# LECTURE V

## THE POWER OF CONTENTMENT IN SCIENCE AND ART

*22nd February*, 1872

76. I MUST ask you, in order to make these lectures of any permanent use, to be careful in keeping note of the main conclusion at which we arrive in the course of each, and of the sequence of such results. In the first, I tried to show you that Art was only wise when unselfish in her labour; in the second, that Science was only wise when unselfish in her statement; in the third, that wise Art was the shadow, or visible reflection, of wise Science; and in the fourth, that all these conditions of good must be pursued temperately and peacefully. I have now farther to tell you that they must be pursued independently.

77. You have not often heard me use that word "independence." And, in the sense in which of late it has been accepted, you have never heard me use it but with contempt. For the true strength of every human soul is to be dependent on as many nobler as it can discern, and to be depended upon, by as many inferior as it can reach.

But to-day I use the word in a widely different sense. I think you must have felt, in what amplification I was able to give you of the idea of wisdom as an unselfish influence in Art and Science, how the highest skill and knowledge were founded in human tenderness, and that the kindly Art-wisdom which rejoices in the habitable parts of the earth,[1] is only another form of the lofty Scientific charity, which rejoices "in the truth."[2] And as the first

[1] [See above, pp. 136, 167.]
[2] [1 Corinthians xiii. 6.]

order of Wisdom is to know thyself—though the least creature that can be known—so the first order of Charity is to be sufficient for thyself, though the least creature that can be sufficed; and thus contented and appeased, to be girded and strong for the ministry to others. If sufficient to thy day is the evil thereof,[1] how much more should be the good!

78. I have asked you to recollect one aphorism respecting Science, one respecting Art; let me—and I will ask no more at this time of asking—press you to learn, farther, by heart, those lines of the Song of the Sirens: six lines of Homer, I trust, will not be a weariness to you—

> οὐ γάρ πώ τις τῇδε παρήλασε νηΐ μελαίνῃ,
> πρίν γ' ἡμέων μελίγηρυν ἀπὸ στομάτων ὄπ' ἀκοῦσαι,
> ἀλλ' ὅ γε τερψάμενος νείται καὶ πλείονα εἰδώς.
> ἴδμεν γάρ τοι πάνθ', ὅσ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρείῃ
> Ἀργεῖοι Τρῶές τε θεῶν ἰότητι μόγησαν·
> ἴδμεν δ' ὅσσα γένηται ἐπὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρῃ.
>
> Hom., *Od.*, xii. 186.

"No one ever rowed past this way in his black ship, before he had listened to the honey-sweet singing of our lips. But he stays pleased, though he may know much. For we know all things which the Greeks and Trojans did in the wide Trojan plain, by the will of the gods, and we know what things take place in the much nourishing earth." And this, remember, is absolutely true. No man ever went past in the black ship,—obeying the grave and sad law of life by which it is appointed for mortals to be victors on the ocean,—but he was tempted, as he drew near that deadly island, wise as he might be, (*καὶ πλείονα εἰδώς,*) by the voices of those who told him that they knew everything which had been done by the will of God, and everything which took place in earth for the service of man.

79. Now observe these two great temptations. You are to know everything that has been done by the will of God:

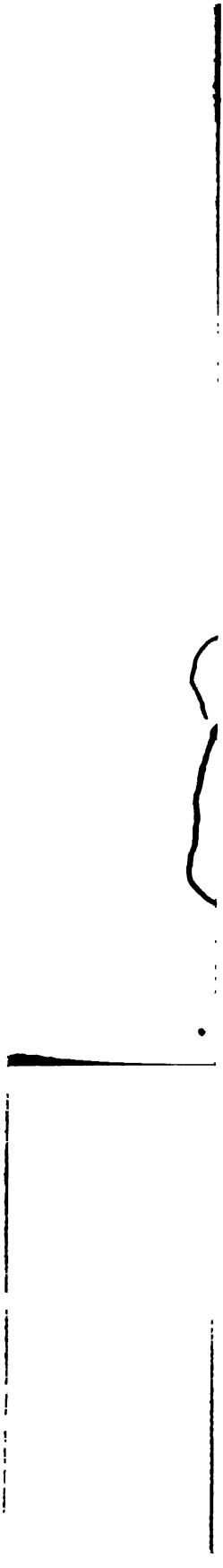
[1] [See Matthew vi. 34.]

and to know everything that is *vital* in the earth. And try to realize to yourselves, for a little while, the way in which these two siren promises have hitherto troubled the paths of men. Think of the books that have been written in false explanation of Divine Providence: think of the efforts that have been made to show that the particular conduct which we approve in others, or wish ourselves to follow, is according to the will of God. Think what ghastly convulsions in thought, and vileness in action, have been fallen into by the sects which thought they had adopted, for their patronage, the perfect purposes of Heaven. Think of the vain research, the wasted centuries of those who have tried to penetrate the secrets of life, or of its support. The elixir vitæ, the philosopher's stone, the germ-cells in meteoric iron, "ἐπὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρῃ."[1] But at this day, when we have loosed the last band from the masts of the black ship, and when, instead of plying every oar to escape, as the crew of Homer's Ulysses, we row like the crew of Dante's Ulysses, and of our oars make wings for our foolish flight,

> "E volta nostra poppa nel mattino,
> De' remi facemmo ali al folle volo"[2]—

the song of the sirens becomes fatal as never yet it has been in time. We think ourselves privileged, first among men, to know the secrets of Heaven, and fulfil the economy of earth; and the result is, that of all the races that yet have been put to shame by their false wisdom or false art,—which have given their labour for that which is not bread, and their strength for that which satisfieth not,[3]—we have most madly abandoned the charity which is for itself sufficing, and for others serviceable, and have become of all creatures the most insufficient to ourselves, and the most malignant to our neighbours. Granted a given degree of

[1] [See the passage from Homer, above, pp. 175, 179; and compare p. 195, below.]
[2] [*Inferno*, xxvi. 124: "To the dawn our poop we turn'd, And for the witless flight made our oars wings" (Cary).]
[Isaiah lv. 2.]



knowledge—granted the "*καὶ πλείονα εἰδώς*" in science, in art, and in literature,—and the present relations of feeling between France and Germany, between England and America, are the most horrible at once in their stupidity and malignity, that have ever taken place on the globe we inhabit, even though all its great histories are of sin, and all its great songs, of death.

80. Gentlemen, I pray you very solemnly to put that idea of knowing all things in Heaven and Earth out of your hearts and heads. It is very little that we can ever know, either of the ways of Providence, or the laws of existence. But that little is enough, and exactly enough: to strive for more than that little is evil for us; and be assured that beyond the need of our narrow being,—beyond the range of the kingdom over which it is ordained for each of us to rule in serene *αὐτάρκεια*[1] and self-possession, he that increaseth toil, increaseth folly; and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow.[2]

81. My endeavour, therefore, to-day will be to point out to you how in the best wisdom, that there may be happy advance, there must first be happy contentment; that, in one sense, we must always be entering its kingdom as a little child, and pleased yet for a time *not* to put away childish things.[3] And while I hitherto have endeavoured only to show how modesty and gentleness of disposition purified Art and Science, by permitting us to recognize the superiority of the work of others to our own—to-day, on the contrary, I wish to indicate for you the uses of infantine self-satisfaction; and to show you that it is by no error or excess in our nature, by no corruption or distortion of our being, that we are disposed to take delight in the little things that we can do ourselves, more than in the great things done by other people. So only that we recognize the littleness and the greatness, it is as much a part

[1] [See the full title of the lecture; above, p. 119.]
[2] [Ecclesiastes i. 18.]
[3] [Mark x. 15; 1 Corinthians xiii. 11.]

of true Temperance to be pleased with the little we know, and the little we can do, as with the little that we have. On the one side Indolence, on the other Covetousness, are as much to be blamed, with respect to our Arts, as our possessions; and every man is intended to find an exquisite personal happiness in his own small skill, just as he is intended to find happiness in his own small house or garden, while he respects, without coveting, the grandeur of larger domains.

82. Nay, more than this: by the wisdom of Nature, it has been appointed that more pleasure may be taken in small things than in great, and more in rude Art than in the finest. Were it otherwise, we might be disposed to complain of the narrow limits which have been set to the perfection of human skill.

I pointed out to you, in a former lecture, that the excellence of sculpture had been confined in past time to the Athenian and Etrurian vales.[1] The absolute excellence of painting has been reached only by the inhabitants of a single city in the whole world; and the faultless manner of religious architecture holds only for a period of fifty years out of six thousand. We are at present tormenting ourselves with the vain effort to teach men everywhere to rival Venice and Athens,—with the practical result of having lost the enjoyment of Art altogether;—instead of being content to amuse ourselves still with the painting and carving which were possible once, and would be pleasant always, in Paris, and London, at Strasbourg, and at York.

I do not doubt[2] that you are greatly startled at my saying that greater pleasure is to be received from inferior Art than from the finest. But what do you suppose makes all men look back to the time of childhood with so much regret (if their childhood has been, in any moderate degree, healthy or peaceful)? That rich charm, which the

[1] [See *Aratra Pentelici*, § 181 (Vol. XX. p. 331).]

[2] [This passage—"I do not doubt . . . no miracle surprise"—with §§ 86 and 87, were reprinted by Ruskin as Appendix iv. in his *Notes on Prout and Hunt*.]

least possession had for us, was in consequence of the poorness of our treasures. That miraculous aspect of the nature around us, was because we had seen little, and knew less. Every increased possession loads us with a new weariness; every piece of new knowledge diminishes the faculty of admiration; and Death is at last appointed to take us from a scene in which, if we were to stay longer, no gift could satisfy us, and no miracle surprise.

83. Little as I myself know, or can do, as compared with any man of essential power, my life has chanced to be one of gradual progress in the things which I began in childish choice;[1] so that I can measure with almost mathematical exactitude the degree of feeling with which less and greater degrees of wealth or skill affect my mind.

I well remember the delight with which, when I was beginning mineralogy, I received from a friend, who had made a voyage to Peru, a little bit of limestone about the size of a hazel nut, with a small film of native silver adhering to its surface. I was never weary of contemplating my treasure, and could not have felt myself richer had I been master of the mines of Copiapo.

I am now about to use as models for your rock drawings stones which my year's income, when I was a boy, would not have bought. But I have long ceased to take any pleasure in their possession; and am only thinking, now, to whom else they can be of use, since they can be of no more to me.

84. But the loss of pleasure to me caused by advance in knowledge of drawings has been far greater than that induced by my riches in minerals.

I have placed, in your Reference Series, one or two drawings of architecture, made when I was a youth of twenty, with perfect ease to myself, and some pleasure to other people.[2] A day spent in sketching then brought with

[1] [Compare *Queen of the Air*, § 112 (Vol. XIX. p. 396).]

[2] [See Reference Series, Nos. 64 and 65: drawings of 1841 (Vol. XXI. p. 31). No. 64 is reproduced on Plate 2 in Vol. IV.; No. 65, on Plate 2 in Vol. III.]

it no weariness, and infinite complacency. I know better now what drawing should be; the effort to do my work rightly fatigues me in an hour, and I never care to look at it again from that day forward.

85. It is true that men of great and real power do the best things with comparative ease;[1] but you will never hear them express the complacency which simple persons feel in partial success. There is nothing to be regretted in this; it is appointed for all men to enjoy, but for few to achieve.

And do not think that I am wasting your time in dwelling on these simple moralities. From the facts I have been stating we must derive this great principle for all effort. That we must endeavour to *do*, not what is absolutely best, but what is easily within our power and adapted to our temper and condition.

86. In your educational series is a lithographic drawing, by Prout, of an old house in Strasbourg.[2] The carvings of its woodwork are in a style altogether provincial, yet of which the origin is very distant. The delicate Renaissance architecture of Italy was affected, even in its finest periods, by a tendency to throw out convex masses at the bases of its pillars; the wood-carvers of the sixteenth century adopted this bulged form as their first element of ornamentation, and these windows of Strasbourg are only imitations by the German peasantry of what, in its finest type, you must seek as far away as the Duomo of Bergamo.[3]

But the burgher, or peasant, of Alsace enjoyed his rude imitation, adapted, as it was, boldly and frankly to the size of his house and the grain of the larch logs of which he built it, infinitely more than the refined Italian enjoyed the floral luxuriance of his marble; and all the treasures of a great exhibition could not have given him the tenth part

[1] [Compare *Pre-Raphaelitism*, § 3 (Vol. XII. p. 344).]

[2] [Educational Series, No. 59 (Vol. XXI. pp. 80, 122). Reproduced in Vol. XIV., Plate XIV.]

[3] [For another reference to this building, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 327 n.).]

of the exultation with which he saw the gable of his roof completed over its jutting fret-work; and wrote among the rude intricacies of its sculpture, in flourished black-letter, that "He and his wife had built their house with God's help, and prayed Him to let them live long in it,—they, and their children."[1]

87. But it is not only the rustic method of architecture which I wish you to note in this plate; it is the rustic method of drawing also. The manner in which these blunt timber carvings are drawn by Prout is just as provincial as the carvings themselves. Born in a far-away district of England, and learning to draw, unhelped, with fishing-boats for his models;[2] making his way instinctively until he had command of his pencil enough to secure a small income by lithographic drawing; and finding picturesque character in buildings from which all the finest lines of their carving had been effaced by time; possessing also an instinct in the expression of such subjects so peculiar as to win for him a satisfying popularity, and, far better, to enable him to derive perpetual pleasure in the seclusion of country hamlets, and the quiet streets of deserted cities,—Prout had never any motive to acquaint himself with the refinements, or contend with the difficulties, of a more accomplished art. So far from this, his manner of work was, by its very imperfection, in the most perfect sympathy with the subjects he enjoyed. The broad chalk touches in which he has represented to us this house at Strasbourg are entirely sufficient to give true idea of its effect. To have drawn its ornaments with subtlety of Leonardesque delineation would only have exposed their faults, and mocked their rusticity. The drawing would have become painful to you from the sense of the time which it had taken to represent what was not worth the labour, and to direct your attention to what could only, if closely examined, be matter of offence. But here you have a simple and provincial draughtsman happily

[1] [Compare *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. p. 229, for a similar inscription.]
[2] [Compare the sketch of Prout's career in Vol. XII. pp. 308 *seq.*]

and adequately expressing a simple and provincial architecture; nor could either builder or painter have become wiser, but to their loss.

88. Is it then, you will ask me, seriously to be recommended, and, however recommendable, is it possible, that men should remain contented with attainments which they know to be imperfect? and that now, as in former times, large districts of country, and generations of men, should be enriched or amused by the products of a clumsy ignorance? I do not know how far it is possible, but I know that wherever you desire to have true art, it is necessary. Ignorance, which is contented and clumsy, will produce what is imperfect, but not offensive. But ignorance *dis*contented and dexterous, learning what it cannot understand, and imitating what it cannot enjoy, produces the most loathsome forms of manufacture that can disgrace or mislead humanity. Some years since, as I was looking through the modern gallery at the quite provincial German School of Düsseldorf, I was fain to leave all their epic and religious designs, that I might stay long before a little painting of a shepherd boy carving his dog out of a bit of deal.[1] The dog was sitting by, with the satisfied and dignified air of a personage about for the first time in his life to be worthily represented in sculpture; and his master was evidently succeeding to his mind in expressing the features of his friend. The little scene was one which, as you know, must take place continually among the cottage artists who supply the toys of Nuremberg and Berne. Happy, these! so long as, undisturbed by ambition, they spend their leisure time in work pretending only to amuse, yet capable, in its own way, of showing accomplished dexterity, and vivid perception of nature. We, in the hope of doing great things, have surrounded our workmen with Italian models, and tempted them with prizes into competitive mimicry of all that is best, or that we imagine to be best, in the work of every

[1] [A picture by E. Bosch. See, for another description of it, *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 338); and for Ruskin's visit to Düsseldorf in 1859, *ibid.*, p. l.]

people under the sun. And the result of our instruction is only that we are able to produce,—I am now quoting the statement I made last May,[1]—"the most perfectly and roundly ill-done things" that ever came from human hands. I should thankfully put upon my chimney-piece the wooden dog cut by the shepherd boy; but I should be willing to forfeit a large sum rather than keep in my room the number 1 of the Kensington Museum—thus described in its catalogue—"Statue in black and white marble, of a Newfoundland dog standing on a serpent, which rests on a marble cushion;—the pedestal ornamented with Pietra Dura fruits in relief."[2]

89. You will, however, I fear, imagine me indulging in my usual paradox,[3] when I assure you that all the efforts we have been making to surround ourselves with heterogeneous means of instruction, will have the exactly reverse effect from that which we intend;—and that, whereas formerly we were able only to do a little well, we are qualifying ourselves now to do everything ill. Nor is the result confined to our workmen only. The introduction of French dexterity and of German erudition has been harmful chiefly to our most accomplished artists—and in the last Exhibition of our Royal Academy there was, I think, no exception to the manifest fact that every painter of reputation painted worse than he did ten years ago.[4]

90. Admitting, however, (not that I suppose you will at once admit, but for the sake of argument, supposing,) that this is true, what, we have further to ask, can be done to discourage ourselves from calamitous emulation, and withdraw our workmen from the sight of what is too good to be of use to them?

[1] [*Fors Clavigera*, Letter 5.]

[2] [See, again, *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 5, where the descriptive tablet is also given, with the addition from it of "*English. Present Century, No. 1.*"]

[3] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 97 (Vol. XX. p. 264); and *Ariadne Florentina*, § 78 (below, p. 349).]

[4] [See the similar references to the Exhibition of 1871 in the Preface to *Aratra Pentelici* (Vol. XX. p. 195); and compare *The Relation between Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, § 32 (above, p. 104).]

But this question is not one which can be determined by the needs, or limited to the circumstances of Art. To live generally more modest and contented lives; to win the greatest possible pleasure from the smallest things; to do what is likely to be serviceable to our immediate neighbours, whether it seem to them admirable or not; to make no pretence of admiring what has really no hold upon our hearts; and to be resolute in refusing all additions to our learning, until we have perfectly arranged and secured what learning we have got;—these are conditions, and laws, of unquestionable *σοφία* and *σωφροσύνη*, which will indeed lead us up to fine art if we are resolved to have it fine; but will also do what is much better, make rude art precious.

91. It is not, however, by any means necessary that provincial art *should* be rude, though it may be singular. Often it is no less delicate than quaint, and no less refined in grace than original in character. This is likely always to take place when a people of naturally fine artistic temper work with the respect which, as I endeavoured to show you in a former lecture, ought always to be paid to local material and circumstance.

I have placed in your educational series the photograph of the door of a wooden house in Abbeville, and of the winding stair above;[1] both so exquisitely sculptured that the real vine-leaves which had wreathed themselves about their pillars, cannot, in the photograph, be at once discerned from the carved foliage. The latter, quite as graceful, can only be known for art by its quaint setting.

Yet this school of sculpture is altogether provincial. It could only have risen in a richly-wooded chalk country, where the sapling trees beside the brooks gave example to the workman of the most intricate tracery, and the white cliffs above the meadows furnished docile material to his hand.[2]

[1] [Educational Series, No. 62 (Vol. XXI. pp. 80, 294). Plate VII. in Vol. XIV. (p. 388); see also Vol. XIX. p. 276.]

[2] [Compare the lecture on "The Flamboyant Architecture of the Valley of the Somme," § 12 (Vol. XIX. p. 251).]

92. I have now, to my sorrow, learned to despise the elaborate intricacy, and the playful realizations, of the Norman designers; and can only be satisfied by the reserved and proud imagination of the master schools. But the utmost pleasure I now take in these is almost as nothing, compared to the joy I used to have, when I knew no better, in the fretted pinnacles of Rouen, and white lace, rather than stonework, of the chapels of Rue and Amboise.[1]

Yet observe that the first condition of this really precious provincial work is its being the best that can be done under the given circumstances; and the second is, that though provincial, it is not in the least frivolous or ephemeral, but as definitely civic, or public, in design, and as permanent in the manner of it, as the work of the most learned academies: while its execution brought out the energies of each little state, not necessarily in rivalship, but severally in the perfecting of styles which Nature had rendered it impossible for their neighbours to imitate.

93. This civic unity, and the feeling of the workman that he is performing his part in a great scene which is to endure for centuries, while yet, within the walls of his city, it is to be a part of his own peculiar life, and to be separate from all the world besides, develops, together, whatever duty he acknowledges as a patriot, and whatever complacency he feels as an artist.

We now build, in our villages, by the rules of the Academy of London; and if there be a little original vivacity or genius in any provincial workman, he is almost sure to spend it in making a ridiculous toy. Nothing is to me much more pathetic than the way that our neglected workmen thus throw their lives away. As I was walking the other day through the Crystal Palace, I came upon a toy which had taken the leisure of five years to make;

[1] [For the Chapelle du St. Esprit at Rue (15 miles north of Abbeville), see Vol. XIX. p. xxxix.; for Ruskin's early impressions of Rouen, see his verses and early drawing in Vol. II. p. 400, and compare *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 94: "the delight with which we look on the fretted front of Rouen"); for Amboise, see again the verses and early drawing (Vol. II. p. 170).]

you dropped a penny into the chink of it, and immediately a little brass steam-engine in the middle started into nervously hurried action; some bell-ringers pulled strings at the bottom of a church steeple which had no top; two regiments of cavalry marched out from the sides, and manœuvred in the middle; and two well-dressed persons in a kind of opera-box expressed their satisfaction by approving gestures.

In old Ghent, or Bruges, or York, such a man as the one who made this toy, with companions similarly minded, would have been taught how to employ himself, not to their less amusement, but to better purpose; and in their five years of leisure hours they would have carved a flamboyant crown for the belfry-tower, and would have put chimes into it that would have told the time miles away, with a pleasant tune for the hour, and a variation for the quarters, and cost the passers-by in all the city and plain not so much as the dropping of a penny into a chink.

94. Do not doubt that I feel, as strongly as any of you can feel, the utter impossibility at present of restoring provincial simplicity to our country towns.

My despondency respecting this, and nearly all other matters which I know to be necessary, is at least as great, —it is certainly more painful to me,—in the decline of life, —than that which any of my younger hearers can feel. But what I have to tell you of the unchanging principles of nature, and of art, must not be affected by either hope or fear. And if I succeed in convincing you what these principles are, there are many practical consequences which you may deduce from them, if ever you find yourselves, as young Englishmen are often likely to find themselves, in authority over foreign tribes of peculiar or limited capacities.

Be assured that you can no more drag or compress men into perfection than you can drag or compress plants. If ever you find yourselves set in a position of authority, and are entrusted to determine modes of education, ascertain first what the people you would teach have been in the

habit of doing, and encourage them to do *that* better. Set no other excellence before their eyes; disturb none of their reverence for the past; do not think yourselves bound to dispel their ignorance, or to contradict their superstitions; teach them only gentleness and truth; redeem them by example from habits which you know to be unhealthy or degrading; but cherish, above all things, *local associations*, and *hereditary skill*.

It is the curse of so-called civilization to pretend to originality by the wilful invention of new methods of error, while it quenches wherever it has power, the noble originality of nations, rising out of the purity of their race, and the love of their native land.

95. I could say much more, but I think I have said enough to justify for the present what you might otherwise have thought singular in the methods I shall adopt for your exercise in the drawing schools. I shall indeed endeavour to write down for you the laws of the art which is centrally best; and to exhibit to you a certain number of its unquestionable standards: but your own actual practice shall be limited to objects which will explain to you the meaning, and awaken you to the beauty, of the art of your own country.

The first series of my lectures on sculpture must have proved to you that I do not despise either the workmanship or the mythology of Greece; but I must assert with more distinctness than even in my earliest works,[1] the absolute unfitness of all its results to be made the guides of English students or artists.

Every nation can represent, with prudence, or success, only the realities in which it delights. What you have with you, and before you, daily, dearest to your sight and heart, *that*, by the magic of your hand, or of your lips, you can gloriously express to others; and what you ought to have in your sight and heart,—what, if you have not,

[1] [See especially *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. pp. 328–329.]

nothing else can be truly seen or loved,—is the human life of your own people, understood in its history, and admired in its presence.

And unless that be first made beautiful, idealism must be false and imagination monstrous.

It is your influence on the existing world which, in your studies here, you ought finally to consider; and although it is not, in that influence, my function to direct you, I hope you will not be discontented to know that I shall ask no effort from your art-genius, beyond the rational suggestion of what we may one day hope to see actually realized in England, in the sweetness of her landscape, and the dignity of her people.

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In connection with the subject of this lecture, I may mention to you that I have received an interesting letter, requesting me to assist in promoting some improvements designed in the city of Oxford.

But as the entire charm and educational power of the city of Oxford, so far as that educational power depended on reverent associations, or on visible solemnities and serenities of architecture, have been already destroyed; and, as far as our own lives extend, destroyed, I may say, for ever, by the manufacturing suburb which heaps its ashes on one side, and the cheap-lodging suburb which heaps its brickbats on the other; I am myself, either as antiquary or artist, absolutely indifferent to what happens next; except on grounds respecting the possible health, cleanliness, and decency which may yet be obtained for the increasing population.

How far cleanliness and decency bear on art and science,[1] or on the changed functions of the university to its crowd of modern students, I have partly to consider in connection with the subject of my next lecture, and I will reserve therefore any definite notice of these proposed improvements in the city, until the next occasion of meeting you.

[1] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, §§ 116, 123 (Vol. XX. pp. 107, 113).]

# LECTURE VI

## THE RELATION TO ART OF THE SCIENCE OF LIGHT[1]

*February 24th*, 1872

96. I HAVE now, perhaps to the exhaustion of your patience, but, you will find, not without real necessity, defined the manner in which the mental tempers, ascertained by philosophy to be evil or good, retard and advance the parallel studies of science and art.

In this and the two next following lectures I shall endeavour to state to you the literal modes in which the virtues of art are connected with the principles of exact science; but now, remember, I am speaking, not of the consummate science of which art is the image; but only of what science we have actually attained, which is often little more than terminology (and even that uncertain), with only a gleam of true science here and there.

I will not delay you by any defence of the arrangement of sciences I have chosen. Of course we may at once dismiss chemistry and pure mathematics from our consideration. Chemistry can do nothing for art but mix her colours, and tell her what stones will stand weather; (I wish, at this day, she did as much;) and with pure mathematics we have nothing whatever to do; nor can that abstract form of high mathesis stoop to comprehend the simplicity of art. To a first wrangler at Cambridge, under the present conditions of his trial, statues will necessarily be stone dolls,[2] and imaginative work unintelligible. We have, then, in true fellowship

[1] [See a reference to this lecture in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 75; and also, below, "Readings in *Modern Painters*," § 60, p. 527.]

[2] [A reference to the saying of Sir Isaac Newton: see Vol. XX. p. 221.]

with art, only the sciences of light and form (optics and geometry). If you will take the first syllable of the word "geometry" to mean earth in the form of flesh, as well as of clay, the two words sum every science that regards graphic art, or of which graphic art can represent the conclusions.

97. To-day we are to speak of optics, the science of seeing;—of that power, whatever it may be, which (by Plato's definition), "through the eyes, manifests colour to us."[1]

Hold that definition always, and remember that "light" means accurately the power that affects the eyes of animals with the sensation proper to them. The study of the effect of light on nitrate of silver is chemistry, not optics; and what is light to *us* may indeed shine on a stone; but is not light to the stone. The "fiat lux"[2] of creation is, therefore, in the deep sense of it, "fiat anima."

We cannot say that it is merely "fiat oculus," for the effect of light on living organism, even when sightless, cannot be separated from its influence on sight. A plant consists essentially of two parts, root and leaf: the leaf by nature seeks light, the root by nature seeks darkness: it is not warmth or cold, but essentially light and shade, which are to them, as to us, the appointed conditions of existence.

98. And you are to remember still more distinctly that the words "fiat lux" mean indeed "fiat anima," because even the power of the eye itself, as such, is *in* its animation. You do not see *with* the lens of the eye. You see *through* that, and by means of that, but you see with the soul of the eye.

99. A great physiologist said to me the other day—it was in the rashness of controversy, and ought not to be remembered, as a deliberate assertion, therefore I do not give his name,[3] still he did say—that sight was "altogether mechanical." The words simply meant, if they meant anything, that all his physiology had never taught him the

[1] [For this reference see Vol. XX. p. 223.]
[2] [Genesis i. 3.]
[3] [He is named, however, in "The Story of Arachne," § 10 (Vol. XX. p. 373)—Professor Huxley. Compare below, p. 512.]

difference between eyes and telescopes. Sight is an absolutely spiritual phenomenon; accurately, and only, to be so defined; and the "Let there be light," is as much, when you understand it, the ordering of intelligence, as the ordering of vision. It is the appointment of change of what had been else only a mechanical effluence from things unseen to things unseeing,—from stars that did not shine to earth that could not perceive;—the change, I say, of that blind vibration into the glory of the sun and moon for human eyes; so rendering possible also the communication out of the unfathomable truth, of that portion of truth which is good for us, and animating to us, and is set to rule over the day and night of our joy and sorrow.

100. The sun was set thus "to rule the day."[1] And of late you have learned that he was set to rule everything that we know of. You have been taught that, by the Sirens, as a piece of entirely new knowledge, much to be exulted over.[2] We painters, indeed, have been for some time acquainted with the general look of the sun, and long before there were painters there were wise men,—Zoroastrian and other,—who had suspected that there was power in the sun; but the Sirens of yesterday have somewhat new, it seems, to tell you of his authority, *ἐπὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρῃ*.[3] I take a passage, almost at random, from a recent scientific work.[4]

"Just as the phenomena of water-formed rocks all owe their existence directly or indirectly chiefly to the sun's energy, so also do the phenomena interwoven with life. This has long been recognized by various eminent British and foreign physicists; and in 1854 Professor ——, in his memoir 'On the Method of Palæontology,' asserted that

[1] [Psalms cxxxvi. 8.]
[2] [See above, § 74, p. 176.]
[3] [See above, pp. 175, 179, 180.]
[4] [The first of the two references (in which the date should be 1856) is to Huxley's memoir in the *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, vol. 18, 1856, pp. 43–54; reprinted in *The Scientific Memoirs of Thomas Henry Huxley*, 1898 (vol. i. p. 432). The second passage, referring all organic and inorganic energy to the sun, comes from Tyndall's *Heat as a Mode of Motion*, 1863, p. 432.]

organisms were but *manifestations of applied physics and applied chemistry.* Professor —— puts the generalizations of physicists in a few words: When speaking of the sun, it is remarked—'He rears the whole vegetable world, and through it the animal; the lilies of the field are his workmanship, the verdure of the meadows, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. He forms the muscle, he urges the blood, he builds the brain. His fleetness is in the lion's foot; he springs in the panther, he soars in the eagle, he slides in the snake. He builds the forest and hews it down, the power which raised the tree and that which wields the axe being one and the same.'"

All this is exceedingly true; and it is new in *one* respect, namely, in the ascertainment that the quantity of solar force necessary to produce motive power is measurable, and, in its sum, unalterable. For the rest, it was perfectly well known in Homer's time, as now, that animals could not move till they were warm; and the fact that the warmth which enables them to do so is finally traceable to the sun, would have appeared to a Greek physiologist, no more interesting than, to a Greek poet, would have been the no less certain fact, that "Tout ce que se peut dire de beau est dans les dictionnaires; il n'y a que les mots qui sont transposés"[1]—Everything fine, that can be said, is in the dictionaries; it is only that the words are transposed.

Yes, indeed; but to the τοιητής the gist of the matter is *in* the transposition. The sun does, as the delighted physicist tells you, unquestionably "slide in the snake"; but how comes he to adopt that manner, we artists ask, of (literally) transposition?

101. The summer before last, as I was walking in the woods near the Giessbach, on the Lake of Brientz, and moving very quietly, I came suddenly on a small steel-grey serpent, lying in the middle of the path; and it was greatly surprised to see me.[2] Serpents, however, always

[1] [For this saying, compare *Ethics of the Dust*, § 109 (Vol. XVIII. p. 344).]
[2] [For another reference to this incident, see *Præterita*, iii. § 37.]

have complete command of their feelings, and it looked at me for a quarter of a minute without the slightest change of posture: then, with an almost imperceptible motion, it began to withdraw itself beneath a cluster of leaves. Without in the least hastening its action, it gradually concealed the whole of its body. I was about to raise one of the leaves, when I saw what I thought was the glance of another serpent, in the thicket at the path side; but it was the same one, which having once withdrawn itself from observation beneath the leaves, used its utmost agility to spring into the wood; and with so instantaneous a flash of motion, that I never saw it leave the covert, and only caught the gleam of light as it glided away into the copse.

102. Now, it was to me a matter of supreme indifference whether the force which the creature used in this action was derived from the sun, the moon, or the gas-works at Berne. What was, indeed, a matter of interest to me, was just that which would have struck a peasant, or a child;—namely, the calculating wisdom of the creature's device; and the exquisite grace, strength, and precision of the action by which it was accomplished.

103. I was interested then, I say, more in the device of the creature, than in its source of motion. Nevertheless, I am pleased to hear, from men of science, how necessarily that motion proceeds from the sun. But where did its *device* come from? There is no wisdom, no device in the dust, any more than there is warmth in the dust.[1] The springing of the serpent is from the sun:—the wisdom of the serpent,[2]—whence that?

104. From the sun also, is the only answer, I suppose, possible to physical science. It is not a false answer: quite true, like the other, up to a certain point. To-day, in the strength of your youth, you may know what it is to have the power of the sun taken out of your arms and

[1] ["There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest" (Ecclesiastes ix. 10).]

[2] [Matthew x. 16.]

legs.[1] But when you are old, you will know what it is to have the power of the sun taken out of your minds also. Such a thing may happen to you, sometimes, even now; but it will continually happen to you when you are my age. You will no more, then, think over a matter to any good purpose after twelve o'clock in the day. It may be possible to think over, and, much more, to talk over, matters, to little, or to bad, purpose after twelve o'clock in the day. The members of your national legislature do their work, we know, by gaslight; but you don't suppose the power of the sun is in any of *their* devices? Quite seriously, all the vital functions,—and, like the rest and with the rest, the pure and wholesome faculties of the brain,—rise and set with the sun: your digestion and intellect are alike dependent on its beams; your thoughts, like your blood, flow from the force of it, in all scientific accuracy and necessity. Sol illuminatio nostra est; Sol salus nostra; Sol sapientia nostra.[2]

And it is the final act and outcome of lowest national atheism, since it cannot deny the sun, at least to strive to do without it; to blast the day in heaven with smoke, and prolong the dance, and the council, by night, with tapers, until at last, rejoicing—Dixit insipiens in corde suo, non est Sol.[3]

105. Well, the sliding of the serpent, and the device of the serpent, we admit, come from the sun. The flight of the dove, and its harmlessness,—do they also?[4]

The flight,—yes, assuredly. The Innocence?—It is a new question. How of that? Between movement and non-movement—nay, between sense and non-sense—the difference rests, we say, in the power of Apollo; but

[1] [Compare, upon the sun as the light, and health and guide of life, §§ 115, 116. Ruskin referred to the three sections in a letter to the *Y. M. A. Magazine*, October 1879 (reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. ii. p. 206, and in a later volume of this edition).]

[2] [Compare below, § 120, p. 206.]

[3] [See Psalms xiv. 1.]

[4] [Matthew x. 16.]

between malice and innocence, where shall we find the root of *that* distinction?

106. Have you ever considered how much literal truth there is in the words—"The light of the body is the eye. If, therefore, thine eye be evil"[1]—and the rest? How *can* the eye be evil? How, if evil, can it fill the whole body with darkness?

What is the meaning of having one's body *full* of darkness? It cannot mean merely being blind. Blind, you may fall in a ditch[2] if you move; but you may be well, if at rest. But to be evil-eyed, is not that worse than to have no eyes? and instead of being only in darkness, to have darkness in *us*, portable, perfect, and eternal?

107. Well, in order to get at the meaning we may, indeed, now appeal to physical science, and ask her to help us. How many manner of eyes are there? You physical-science students should be able to tell us painters that. We only know, in a vague way, the external aspect and expression of eyes. We see, as we try to draw the endlessly-grotesque creatures about us, what infinite variety of instruments they have; but you know, far better than we do, how those instruments are constructed and directed. You know how some play in their sockets with independent revolution,—project into near-sightedness on pyramids of bone,—are brandished at the points of horns,—studded over backs and shoulders,—thrust at the ends of antennæ to pioneer for the head, or pinched up into tubercles at the corners of the lips. But how do the creatures see out of all these eyes?

108. No business of ours, you may think? Pardon me. This is no Siren's question[3]—this is altogether business of ours, lest, perchance, any of us should see partly in the same manner. Comparative sight is a far more important question than comparative anatomy. It is no matter, though we sometimes walk—and it may often be desirable to climb

[1] [Matthew vi. 22, 23.]
[2] [Matthew xv. 14.]
[3] [See above, p. 175.]

—like apes; but suppose we only *see* like apes, or like lower creatures? I can tell you, the science of optics is an essential one to us; for exactly according to these infinitely grotesque directions and multiplications of instrument you have correspondent, not only intellectual but moral, faculty in the soul of the creatures. Literally, if the eye be pure, the body is pure; but, if the light of the body be but darkness, how great is that darkness!

109. Have you ever looked attentively at the study I gave you of the head of the rattlesnake?[1] The serpent will keep its eyes fixed on you for an hour together, a vertical slit in each admitting such image of you as is possible to the rattlesnake retina, and to the rattlesnake mind. How much of you do you think it sees? I ask that, first, as a pure physical question. I do not know; it is not my business to know. You, from your schools of physical science, should bring me answer. How much of a man can a snake see? What sort of image of him is received through that deadly vertical cleft in the iris;—through the glazed blue of the ghastly lens? Make me a picture of the appearance of a man, as far as you can judge it can take place on the snake's retina. Then ask yourselves, farther, how much of speculation is possible to the snake, touching this human aspect?

110. Or, if that seem too far beneath possible inquiry, how say you of a tiger's eye, or a cat's? A cat may look at a king;—yes; but can it *see* a king when it looks at him? The beasts of prey never seem to me to *look*, in our sense, at all. Their eyes are fascinated by the motion of anything, as a kitten's by a ball;—they fasten, as if drawn by an inevitable attraction, on their food. But when a cat caresses you, it never looks at you. Its heart seems to be in its back and paws, not its eyes. It will rub itself against you, or pat you with velvet tufts, instead of talons; but you may talk to it an hour together, yet not rightly catch

[1] [Two studies of the rattlesnake, made by Ruskin at the British Museum in 1870, were at the time in the Educational Series (Nos. 172, 173: Vol. XXI. p. 90), but Ruskin afterwards removed them.]

its eye. Ascend higher in the races of being—to the fawn, the dog, the horse; you will find that, according to the clearness of sight, is indeed the kindness of sight, and that at last the noble eyes of humanity look through humanity, from heart into heart, and with no mechanical vision. And the Light of the body is the eye—yes, and in happy life, the light of the heart also.

111. But now note farther: there is a mathematical power in the eye which may far transcend its moral power. When the moral power is feeble, the faculty of measurement, or of distinct delineation, may be supreme; and of comprehension none. But here, again, I want the help of the physical science schools. I believe the eagle has no scent, and hunts by sight, yet flies higher than any other bird. Now, I want to know what the appearance is to an eagle, two thousand feet up, of a sparrow in a hedge, or of a partridge in a stubble-field. What kind of definition on the retina do these brown spots take to manifest themselves as signs of a thing eatable; and if an eagle sees a partridge so, does it see everything else so? And then tell me, farther, does it see only a square yard at a time, and yet, as it flies, take summary of the square yards beneath it? When next you are travelling by express sixty miles an hour, past a grass bank, try to see a grasshopper, and you will get some idea of an eagle's optical business, if it takes only the line of ground underneath it. Does it take more?

112. Then, besides this faculty of clear vision, you have to consider the faculty of metric vision. Neither an eagle, nor a kingfisher, nor any other darting bird, can see things with both their eyes at the same time as completely as you and I can; but think of their faculty of measurement as compared with ours! You will find that it takes you months of labour before you can acquire accurate power, even of *deliberate* estimate of distances with the eye; it is one of the points to which, most of all, I have to direct your work. And the curious thing is that, given the

degree of practice, you will measure ill or well with the eye in proportion to the quantity of life in you. No one can measure with a glance, when they are tired. Only the other day I got half an inch out of a foot, in drawing merely a coat of arms, because I was tired. But fancy what would happen to a swallow, if *it* was half an inch out in a foot, in flying round a corner!

118. Well, that is the first branch of the questions which we want answered by optical science;—the actual distortion, contraction, and other modification, of the sight of different animals, as far as it can be known from the forms of their eyes. Then, secondly, we ourselves need to be taught the connection of the sense of colour with health; the difference in the physical conditions which lead us to seek for gloom, or brightness of hue; and the nature of purity in colour, first in the object seen, and then in the eye which prefers it.

. . . . . .

(The portion of lecture here omitted referred to illustrations of vulgarity and delicacy in colour, showing that the vulgar colours, even when they seemed most glaring, were in reality impure and dull; and destroyed each other by contention; while noble colour, intensely bright and pure, was nevertheless entirely governed and calm, so that every colour bettered and aided all the rest.)

114. You recollect how I urged you in my opening course of lectures rather to work in the school of crystalline colour than in that of shade.[1]

Since I gave that first course of lectures, my sense of the necessity of this study of brightness primarily, and of purity and gaiety beyond all other qualities, has deeply been confirmed by the influence which the unclean horror and impious melancholy of the modern French school[2]—most literally the school of death—has gained over the popular mind. I will not dwell upon the evil phrenzy to-day. But

[1] [See *Lectures on Art*, § 187 (Vol. XX. p. 176).]

[2] [Compare above, p. 172, and the Preface to *Aratra Pentelici*, Vol. XX. p. 195; and for earlier references to the deadness of colour in the French school, see Vol. XIV. p. 141.]

it is in order at once to do the best I can, in counteraction of its deadly influence, though not without other and constant reasons, that I give you heraldry, with all its splendour and its pride, its brightness of colour, and honourableness of meaning, for your main elementary practice.[1]

115. To-day I have only time left to press on your thoughts the deeper law of this due joy in colour and light.

On any morning of the year, how many pious supplications, do you suppose, are uttered throughout educated Europe for "light"? How many lips at least pronounce the word, and, perhaps, in the plurality of instances, with some distinct idea attached to it? It is true the speakers employ it only as a metaphor. But why is their language thus metaphorical? If they mean merely to ask for spiritual knowledge or guidance, why not say so plainly, instead of using this jaded figure of speech? No boy goes to his father when he wants to be taught, or helped, and asks his father to give him "light." He asks what he wants, advice or protection. Why are not we also content to ask our Father for what we want, in plain English?

The metaphor, you will answer, is put into our mouths, and felt to be a beautiful and necessary one.

I admit it. In your Educational Series, first of all examples of modern art,[2] is the best engraving I could find of the picture which, founded on that idea of Christ's being the Giver of Light, contains, I believe, the most true and useful piece of religious vision which realistic art has yet embodied. But why is the metaphor so necessary, or, rather, how far is it a metaphor at all? Do you think the words "Light of the World" mean only "Teacher or Guide of the World"? When the Sun of Justice is said to rise

[1] [See the *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series* and "Instructions in Elementary Drawing," Vol. XXI. pp. 173 *seq.*, 244 *seq.*; and with this passage on heraldry, compare *Laws of Fésole*, Vol. XV. pp. 365 *seq.*]

[2] [Educational Series, No. 2—an engraving of Holman Hunt's "Light of the World": see Vol. XXI. pp. 75, 105; and for the picture itself, Vol. XII. pp. 328 *seq.*]

with health in its wings,[1] do you suppose the image only means the correction of error? Or does it even mean so much? The Light of Heaven is needed to do that perfectly. But what we are to pray for is the Light of the *World;* nay, the Light "that lighteth *every man that cometh into the world.*"[2]

116. You will find that it is no metaphor—nor has it ever been so.

To the Persian, the Greek, and the Christian, the sense of the power of the God of Light has been one and the same. That power is not merely in teaching or protecting, but in the enforcement of purity of body, and of equity or justice in the heart; and this, observe, not heavenly purity, nor final justice; but, now, and here, actual purity in the midst of the world's foulness,—practical justice in the midst of the world's iniquity. And the physical strength of the organ of sight,—the physical purity of the flesh, the actual love of sweet light and stainless colour,—are the necessary signs, real, inevitable, and visible, of the prevailing presence, with any nation, or in any house, of the "Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

117. *Physical* purity;—actual love of sweet light, and of fair colour. This is one palpable sign, and an entirely needful one, that we have got what we pretend to pray for every morning. That, you will find, is the meaning of Apollo's war with the Python[3]—of your own St. George's war with the dragon. You have got that battle stamped again on every sovereign in your pockets, but do you think the sovereigns are helping, at this instant, St. George in his battle? Once, on your gold of the Henrys' times, you had St. Michael and the dragon, and called your coins "angels." How much have they done lately, of angelic work, think you, in purifying the earth?

118. Purifying, literally, purging and cleansing. That is

[1] [Malachi iv. 2; compare Vol. XVII. p. 59, and Vol. XVIII. p. 360.]
[2] [John i. 9.]
[3] [For Apollo and the Python, see above, pp. 63–64, 67 *n.*]

the first "sacred art" all men have to learn. And the words I deferred[1] to the close of this lecture, about the proposed improvements in Oxford, are very few. Oxford is, indeed, capable of much improvement, but only by undoing the greater part of what has been done to it within the last twenty years; and, at present, the one thing that I would say to well-meaning persons is, "For Heaven's sake —literally for Heaven's sake—let the place alone, and clean it." I walked last week to Iffley—not having been there for thirty years. I did not know the church inside; I found it pitch-dark with painted glass of barbarous manufacture, and the old woman who showed it infinitely proud of letting me in at the front door instead of the side one. But close by it, not fifty yards down the hill, there was a little well —a holy well it should have been; beautiful in the recess of it, and the lovely ivy and weeds above it, had it but been cared for in a human way; but so full of frogs that you could not have dipped a cup in it without catching one.

What is the use of pretty painted glass in your churches when you have the plagues of Egypt outside of them?

119. I walked back from Iffley to Oxford by what was once the most beautiful approach to an academical city of any in Europe. Now it is a wilderness of obscure and base buildings. You think it a fine thing to go into Iffley church by the front door;—and you build cheap lodging-houses over all the approach to the chief university of English literature! That, forsooth, is your luminous cloister, and porch of Polygnotus[2] to your temple of Apollo. And in the centre of that temple, at the very foot of the dome of the Radclyffe, between two principal colleges, the lane by which I walked from my own college half-an-hour ago, to this place,—Brasen-nose Lane—is left in a state as loathsome as a back-alley in the East end of London.

120. These, I suppose, are the signs of extending liberality, and disseminated advantages of education.

[1] [See above, § 95, p. 191.]
[2] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 204 (Vol. XX. p. 349).]

Gentlemen, if, as was lately said by a leading member of your Government, the function of a university be only to examine,[1] it may indeed examine the whole mob of England in the midst of a dunghill; but it cannot teach the gentlemen of England in the midst of a dunghill; no, nor even the people of England. How many of her people it *ought* to teach is a question. We think, nowadays, our philosophy is to light every man that cometh into the world, and to light every man equally. Well, when indeed you give up all other commerce in this island, and, as in Bacon's *New Atlantis*, only buy and sell to get God's first creature, which was light,[2] there may be some equality of gain for us in that possession. But until then,—and we are very far from such a time—the light cannot be given to all men equally. Nay, it is becoming questionable whether, instead of being equally distributed to all, it may not be equally withdrawn from us all: whether the ideas of purity and justice,—of loveliness which is to sanctify our peace,—and of justice which is to sanctify our battle, are not vanishing from the purpose of our policy, and even from the conception of our education.

The uses, and the desire, of seclusion, of meditation, of restraint, and of correction—are they not passing from us in the collision of worldly interests, and restless contests of mean hope, and meaner fear? What light, what health, what peace, or what security,—youths of England—do you come here now to seek? In what sense do you receive—with what sincerity do you adopt for yourselves—the ancient legend of your schools, "Dominus illuminatio mea, et salus mea; quem timebo"?[3]

[1] [The reference is to Robert Lowe (Lord Sherbrooke), Chancellor of the Exchequer and Member for the University of London. Compare Matthew Arnold's *Higher Schools and Universities in Germany*, preface to the second edition (1874) p. xiii.: "They may be told by Mr. Lowe that all a man ought to wish for is an Examining Board, and that faculties and professors are a great mistake," etc. Views somewhat to this effect were implied in Lowe's speech at Halifax (*Times*, December 6, 1871).]

[2] [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 160, where other references to the *New Atlantis* are given (Vol. XVIII. p. 514 *n.*).]

[3] [Psalms xxvii. 1.]

121. Remember that the ancient theory on which this university was founded,—not the theory of any one founder, observe, nor even the concluded or expressed issue of the wisdom of many; but the tacit feeling by which the work and hope of all were united and completed — was, that England should gather from among her children a certain number of purest and best, whom she might train to become, each in their day of strength, her teachers and patterns in religion, her declarers and doers of justice in law and her leaders in battle. Bred, it might be, by their parents, in the fond poverty of learning, or amidst the traditions and discipline of illustrious houses,—in either manner separate, from their youth up, to their glorious offices—they came here to be kindled into the lights that were to be set on the hills of England, brightest of the pious, the loyal, and the brave. Whatever corruption blighted, whatever worldliness buried, whatever sin polluted their endeavour, this conception of its meaning remained; and was indeed so fulfilled in faithfulness, that to the men whose passions were tempered, and whose hearts confirmed, in the calm of these holy places, you, now living, owe all that is left to you of hope in heaven, and all of safety or honour that you have to trust and defend on earth.

Their children have forfeited, some by guilt, and many in folly, the leadership they inherited; and every man in England now is to do and to learn what is right in his own eyes.[1] How much need, therefore, that we should learn first of all what eyes are; and what vision they ought to possess—science of sight granted only to clearness of soul;[2] but granted in its fulness even to mortal eyes: for though, after the skin, worms may destroy their body, happy the pure in heart, for they, yet in their flesh, shall see the Light of Heaven, and know the will of God.[3]

[1] [Deuteronomy xii. 18; compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 223 (below, p. 455).]
[2] [Matthew v. 8: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." See below, § 176, p. 242.]
[3] [Job xix. 26.]

# LECTURE VII

## THE RELATION TO ART OF THE SCIENCES OF INORGANIC FORM

*February 29th, 1872*

122. I DID not wish in my last lecture, after I had directed your attention to the special bearing of some of the principles I pleaded for, to enforce upon you any farther general conclusions. But it is necessary now to collect the gist of what I endeavoured to show you respecting the organs of sight; namely, that in proportion to the physical perfectness or clearness of them is the degree in which they are raised from the perception of prey to the perception of beauty and of affection. The imperfect and brutal instrument of the eye may be vivid with malignity, or wild with hunger, or manifoldly detective with microscopic exaggeration, assisting the ingenuity of insects with a multiplied and permanent monstrosity of all things round them; but the noble human sight, careless of prey, disdainful of minuteness, and reluctant to anger, becomes clear in gentleness, proud in reverence, and joyful in love. And finally, the physical splendour of light and colour, so far from being the perception of a mechanical force by a mechanical instrument, is an entirely spiritual consciousness, accurately and absolutely proportioned to the purity of the moral nature, and to the force of its natural and wise affections.

123. That was the sum of what I wished to show you in my last lecture; and observe, that what remains to me doubtful in these things,—and it is much—I do not trouble you with. Only what I know that on experiment you can ascertain for yourselves, I tell you, and illustrate, for the

time, as well as I can. Experiments in art are difficult, and take years to try; you may at first fail in them, as you might in a chemical analysis; but in all the matters which in this place I shall urge on your attention I can assure you of the final results.

That, then, being the sum of what I could tell you with certainty respecting the methods of sight, I have next to assure you that this faculty of sight, disciplined and pure, is the only proper faculty which the graphic artist is to use in his inquiries into nature. His office is to show her appearances; his duty is to know them. It is not his duty, though it may be sometimes for his convenience, while it is always at his peril, that he knows more;—knows the *causes* of appearances, or the essence of the things that produce them.

124. Once again, therefore, I must limit my application of the word science with respect to art. I told you[1] that I did not mean by "science" such knowledge as that triangles on equal bases and between parallels are equal, but such knowledge as that the stars in Cassiopeia are in the form of a *W*. But, farther still, it is not to be considered as science, for an artist, that they are stars at all. What *he* has to know is that they are luminous points which twinkle in a certain manner, and are pale yellow, or deep yellow, and may be quite deceptively imitated at a certain distance by brass-headed nails. This he ought to know, and to remember accurately, and his art knowledge — the science, that is to say—of which his art is to be the reflection, is the sum of knowledges of this sort; his memory of the look of the sun and moon at such and such times, through such and such clouds; his memory of the look of the mountains,—of the look of sea,—of the look of human faces.

125. Perhaps you would not call that "science" at all. It is no matter what either you or I call it. It *is* science of a certain order of facts. Two summers ago, looking

[1] [See above, § 38, p. 151.]

from Verona at sunset, I saw the mountains beyond the Lago di Garda of a strange blue, vivid and rich like the bloom of a damson.[1] I never saw a mountain-blue of that particular quality before or since. My science as an artist consists in my knowing that sort of blue from every other sort, and in my perfect recollection that this particular blue had such and such a green associated with it in the near fields. I have nothing whatever to do with the atmospheric causes of the colour: that knowledge would merely occupy my brains wastefully, and warp my artistic attention and energy from their point. Or to take a simpler instance yet: Turner, in his early life, was sometimes good-natured, and would show people what he was about. He was one day making a drawing of Plymouth harbour, with some ships at the distance of a mile or two, seen against the light. Having shown this drawing to a naval officer, the naval officer observed with surprise, and objected with very justifiable indignation, that the ships of the line had no port-holes. "No," said Turner, "certainly not. If you will walk up to Mount Edgecumbe, and look at the ships against the sunset, you will find you can't see the port-holes." "Well, but," said the naval officer, still indignant, "you know the port-holes are there." "Yes," said Turner, "I know that well enough; but my business is to draw what I see, and not what I know is there."[2]

126. Now, that is the law of all fine artistic work whatsoever; and, more than that, it is, on the whole, perilous to you, and undesirable, that you *should* know what is there. If, indeed, you have so perfectly disciplined your sight that it cannot be influenced by prejudice;—if you are sure that none of your knowledge of what is there will be allowed to assert itself; and that you can reflect the ship as simply as the sea beneath it does, though you may

[1] [See the description of this sunset in the letter to his mother, from Verona (May 21, 1869), given in Vol. XIX. p. xlix.]

[2] [This conversation is reported (not quite in Ruskin's words) in Cyrus Redding's *Fifty Years' Recollections, Literary and Personal*, 1858, vol. i. p. 205; thence cited in Thornbury's *Life of Turner* (p. 145, 1877 edition). The "naval officer" was Demaria, an officer in the army.]

know it with the intelligence of a sailor,—then, indeed, you may allow yourself the pleasure, and what will sometimes be the safeguard from error, of learning what ships or stars, or mountains, are in reality; but the ordinary powers of human perception are almost certain to be disturbed by the knowledge of the real nature of what they draw: and, until you are quite fearless of your faithfulness to the appearances of things, the less you know of their reality the better.

127. And it is precisely in this passive and naïve simplicity that art becomes, not only greatest in herself, but most useful to science. If she *knew* anything of what she was representing, she would exhibit that partial knowledge with complacency; and miss the points beside it, and beyond it. Two painters draw the same mountain; the one has got unluckily into his head some curiosity about glacier marking; and the other has a theory of cleavage. The one will scratch his mountain all over;—the other split it to pieces; and both drawings will be equally useless for the purposes of honest science.

128. Any of you who chance to know my books cannot but be surprised at my saying these things; for, of all writers on art, I suppose there is no one who appeals so often as I do to physical science. But observe, I appeal as a critic of art, never as a master of it. Turner made drawings of mountains and clouds which the public said were absurd. I said, on the contrary, they were the only true drawings of mountains and clouds ever made yet: and I proved this to be so, as only it could be proved, by steady test of physical science: but Turner had drawn his mountains rightly, long before their structure was known to any geologist in Europe;[1] and has painted perfectly truths of anatomy in clouds which I challenge any meteorologist in Europe to explain at this day.

129. And indeed I was obliged to leave *Modern Painters* incomplete, or, rather, as a mere sketch of intention, in

[1] [On this subject, compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. pp. 237, 276).]

analysis of the forms of cloud and wave, because I had not scientific data enough to appeal to.[1] Just reflect for an instant how absolutely whatever has been done in art to represent these most familiar, yet most spectral forms of cloud—utterly inorganic, yet, by spiritual ordinance, in their kindness fair, and in their anger frightful,—how all that has yet been done to represent them, from the undulating bands of blue and white which give to heraldry its nebule bearing, to the finished and deceptive skies of Turner, has been done without one syllable of help from the lips of science.*

180. The rain which flooded our fields the Sunday before last, was followed, as you will remember, by bright days, of which Tuesday the 20th was, in London, notable for the splendour, towards the afternoon, of its white cumulus clouds. There has been so much black east wind lately, and so much fog and artificial gloom, besides, that I find it is actually some two years since I last saw a noble cumulus cloud under full light. I chanced to be standing under the Victoria Tower at Westminster, when the largest mass of them floated past, that day, from the north-west; and I was more impressed than ever yet by the awfulness of the cloud-form, and its unaccountableness, in the present state of our knowledge. The Victoria Tower, seen against it, had no magnitude: it was like looking at Mont Blanc over a lamp-post. The domes of cloud-snow were heaped as definitely; their broken flanks were as grey and firm as rocks, and the whole mountain, of a compass and height in heaven which only became more and more inconceivable as the eye strove

* Rubens' rainbow, in the Loan Exhibition this year,[2] was of dull blue, *darker* than the sky, in a scene lighted from the side of the rainbow. Rubens is not to be blamed for ignorance of optics, but for never having so much as looked at a rainbow carefully: and I do not believe that my friend Mr. Alfred Hunt, whose study of rainbow, in the rooms of the Water-Colour Society last year, was unrivalled, for vividness and truth, by any I know, learned how to paint it by studying optics.[3]

[1] [Compare the Preface to the fifth volume of *Modern Painters*, Vol. VII. p. 7.]

[2] [No. 125 in the Exhibition of 1872—"A Landscape: The Rainbow," lent by Sir Richard Wallace—and now No. 63 in the Hertford House Collection.]

[3] [No. 60 in the Exhibition of 1871—"Sunlight through Rain."]

to ascend it, was passing behind the tower with a steady march, whose swiftness must in reality have been that of a tempest: yet, along all the ravines of vapour, precipice kept pace with precipice, and not one thrust another.[1]

131. What is it that hews them out? Why is the blue sky pure there,—cloud solid here; and edged like marble: and why does the state of the blue sky pass into the state of cloud, in that calm advance?

It is true that you can more or less imitate the forms of cloud with explosive vapour or steam; but the steam melts instantly, and the explosive vapour dissipates itself. The cloud, of perfect form, proceeds unchanged. It is not an explosion, but an enduring and advancing presence. The more you think of it, the less explicable it will become to you.

132. That this should yet be unexplained in the kingdom of the air is, however, no marvel, since aspects of a similar kind are unexplained in the earth, which we tread, and in the water which we drink and wash with. You seldom pass a day without receiving some pleasure from the cloudings in marble; can you explain how the stone was clouded?[2] You certainly do not pass a day without washing your hands. Can you explain the frame of a soap-bubble?

133. I have allowed myself, by way of showing at once what I wanted to come to, to overlook the proper arrangement of my subject, and I must draw back a little.

For all his own purposes, merely graphic, we say, if an artist's eye is fine and faithful, the fewer points of science he has in his head, the better. But for purposes *more* than graphic, in order that he may feel towards things as he should, and choose them as *we* should, he ought to know something about them; and if he is quite sure that he can receive the science of them without letting himself become uncandid and narrow in observation, it is very desirable that he should be acquainted with a little of the alphabet of

[1] [Joel ii. 8. Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 150 and *n.*).]
[2] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 108 (Vol. XX. p. 102).]

structure,—just as much as may quicken and certify his observation, without prejudicing it. Cautiously, therefore, and receiving it as a perilous indulgence, he may venture to learn, perhaps as much astronomy as may prevent his carelessly putting the new moon wrong side upwards; and as much botany as will prevent him from confusing, which I am sorry to say Turner did, too often, Scotch firs with stone pines.[1] He may concede so much to geology as to choose, of two equally picturesque views, one that illustrates rather than conceals the structure of a crag: and perhaps, once or twice in his life, a portrait painter might advantageously observe how unlike a skull is to a face. And for you, who are to use your drawing as one element in general education, it is desirable that physical science should assist in the attainment of truth which a real painter seizes by practice of eye.

184. For this purpose I shall appeal to your masters in science to furnish us, as they have leisure, with some simple and readable accounts of the structure of things which we have to draw continually. Such scientific accounts will not usually much help us to draw them, but will make the drawing, when done, far more valuable to us.

I have told you, for instance, that nobody—at least, no painter—can at present explain the structure of a bubble.[2] To know that structure will not help you to draw sea-foam, but it will make you look at sea-foam with greater interest.

I am not able now to watch the course of modern science, and may perhaps be in error in thinking that the frame of a bubble is still unexplained. But I have not yet met, by any chance, with an account of the forces which, under concussion, arrange the particles of a fluid into a globular film; though, from what I know of cohesion, gravity, and the nature of the atmosphere, I can make

[1] [Compare what Ruskin says of Turner in *Modern Painters:* "into the spirit of the pine he cannot enter" (Vol. III. p. 236; and compare Vol. VII. p. 105 and *n.*]

[2] [Compare *Modern Painters,* vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 137). Some correspondence which Ruskin had in 1885 with Sir Oliver Lodge on such points is given in a later volume of this edition.]

some shift to guess at the kind of action that takes place in forming a single bubble. But how one bubble absorbs another without breaking it; or what exact methods of tension prepare for the change of form, and establish it in an instant, I am utterly at a loss to conceive.

Here, I think, then, is one familiar matter which up to the possible point, science might condescendingly interpret for us. The exhaustion of the film in preparation for its change: the determination of the smaller bubble to yield itself up to the larger: the instantaneous flash into the new shape, and the swift adjustment of the rectangular lines of intersection in the marvellous vaulting—all this I want to be explained to us, so that, if we cannot understand it altogether, we may at least know exactly how far we do, and how far we do not.

135. And, next to the laws of the formation of a bubble, I want to see, in simple statement, those of the formation of a bottle. Namely, the laws of its resistance to fracture, from without and within, by concussion or explosion; and the due relations of form to thickness of material; so that, putting the problem in a constant form, we may know, out of a given quantity of material, how to make the strongest bottle under given limitations as to shape. For instance, —you have so much glass given you: your bottle is to hold two pints, to be flat-bottomed, and so narrow and long in the neck that you can grasp it with your hand. What will be its best ultimate form?

136. Probably, if you thought it courteous, you would laugh at me just now; and, at any rate, are thinking to yourselves that *this* art problem at least needs no scientific investigation, having been practically solved, long ago, by the imperative human instinct for the preservation of bottled stout. But you are only feeling now, gentlemen, and recognizing in one instance, what I tell you of all. Every scientific investigation is, in the same sense as this would be, useless to the trained master of any art. To the soap-bubble blower, and glass-blower,—to the pot-maker and

bottle-maker,—if dexterous craftsmen, your science is of no account; and the imp of their art may be imagined as always looking triumphantly and contemptuously, out of its successfully-produced bottle, on the vain analysis of centrifugal impulse and inflating breath.

187. Nevertheless, in the present confusion of instinct and opinion as to beautiful form, it is desirable to have these two questions more accurately dealt with. For observe what they branch into. The coloured segments of globe out of which foam is constituted, are portions of spherical vaults constructed of fluent particles. You cannot have the principles of spherical vaulting put in more abstract terms.

Then considering the arch as the section of a vault, the greater number of Gothic arches may be regarded as the intersections of two spherical vaults.

Simple Gothic foliation is merely the triple, quadruple, or variously multiple repetition of such intersection.

And the beauty—(observe this carefully)—the beauty of Gothic arches, and of their foliation, always involves reference to the strength of their structure; but only to their structure as *self-sustaining; not as sustaining superincumbent weight.* In the most literal of senses, "the earth hath bubbles as the water hath; and these are of them."[1]

188. What do you think made Michael Angelo look back to the dome of Santa Maria del Fiore, saying, "Like thee I will not build one, better than thee I cannot"?[2] To you or to me there is nothing in that dome different from hundreds of others. Which of you, who have been at Florence, can tell me honestly he saw anything wonderful in it? But Michael Angelo knew the exact proportion of thickness to weight and curvature which enabled it to stand

[1] [*Macbeth* i. 3, 79.]

[2] [It was with regard to the lantern of S. Lorenzo at Florence that people told Michael Angelo that he would make it better than Brunelleschi's on the Cathedral. "Different perhaps, but better, no!" he answered (see J. A. Symonds's *Life of Michelangelo*, vol. i. p. 375). For another reference to Michael Angelo's saying, see the lecture on Brunelleschi in *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence*, (Vol. XXIII.).]

as securely as a mountain of adamant, though it was only a film of clay, as frail, in proportion to its bulk, as a sea-shell. Over the massy war towers of the city it floated; fragile, yet without fear. "Better than thee I cannot."

139. Then think what the investigation of the bottle branches into, joined with that of its necessary companion, the cup. There is a sketch for you of the cup of cups, the pure Greek κάνθαρος,[1] which is always in the hand of Dionusos, as the thunderbolt is in that of Zeus. Learn but to draw that thoroughly, and you won't have much more to learn of abstract form; for the investigation of the kinds of line that limit this will lead you into all the practical geometry of nature; the ellipses of her sea-bays in perspective; the parabolas of her waterfalls and fountains in profile; the catenary curves of their falling festoons in front; the infinite variety of accelerated or retarded curvature in every condition of mountain débris. But do you think mere science can measure for you any of these things? That book on the table is one of the four volumes of Sir William Hamilton's *Greek Vases*.[2] He has measured every important vase vertically and horizontally, with precision altogether admirable, and which may, I hope, induce you to have patience with me in the much less complex, though even more scrupulous, measurements which I shall require on my own examples. Yet English pottery remains precisely where it was, in spite of all this investigation. Do you fancy a Greek workman ever made a vase by measurement? He dashed it from his hand on the wheel, and it was beautiful: and a Venetian glass-blower swept you a curve of crystal from the end of his pipe; and Reynolds or Tintoret swept you a curve of colour from their pencils, as a musician the cadence of a note, unerring, and to be measured, if you please, afterwards, with the exactitude of Divine law.

140. But, if the truth and beauty of art are thus beyond

[1] [See Rudimentary Series, II., No. 53 (Vol. XXI. p. 180).]
[2] [*Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases:* Naples, 1791–1795, 4 vols. folio.]

attainment by help of science, how much more its invention? I must defer what I have chiefly to say on this head till next lecture; but to-day I can illustrate, simply, the position of invention with respect to science in one very important group of inorganic forms—those of drapery.

141. If you throw at random over a rod a piece of drapery of any material which will fall into graceful folds, you will get a series of sinuous folds in catenary curves: and any given disposition of these will be nearly as agreeable as any other; though, if you throw the stuff on the rod a thousand times, it will not fall twice alike.

142. But suppose, instead of a straight rod, you take a beautiful nude statue, and throw the piece of linen over that. You may encumber and conceal its form altogether; you may entirely conceal portions of the limbs, and show others; or you may leave indications, under the thin veil, of the contours which are hidden; but in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred you will wish the drapery taken off again; you will feel that the folds are in some sort discrepant and harmful, and eagerly snatch them away. However passive the material, however softly accommodated to the limbs, the wrinklings will always look foreign to the form, like the drip of a heavy shower of rain falling off it, and will load themselves in the hollows uncomfortably. You will have to pull them about; to stretch them one way, loosen them in another, and supply the quantity of government which a living person would have given to the dress, before it becomes at all pleasing to you.

143. Doing your best, you will still not succeed to your mind, provided you have, indeed, a mind worth pleasing. No adjustment that you can make, on the quiet figure, will give any approximation to the look of drapery which has previously accommodated itself to the action which brought the figure into the position in which it stays. On a really living person, gracefully dressed, and who has paused from graceful motion, you will get, again and again, arrangements of fold which you can admire: but they will not

remain to be copied, the first following movement alters all. If you had your photographic plate ready and could photograph—I don't know if it has been tried—girls, like waves, as they move, you would get what was indeed lovely; and yet, when you compared even such results with fine sculpture, you would see that there was something wanting;—that, in the deepest sense, *all* was yet wanting.

144. Yet this is the most that the plurality of artists can do, or think of doing. They draw the nude figure with careful anatomy; they put their model or their lay figure into the required position; they arrange draperies on it to their mind, and paint them from the reality. All such work is absolutely valueless,—worse than valueless in the end of it, blinding us to the qualities of fine work.

In true design it is in this matter of drapery as in all else. There is not a fold too much, and all that are given aid the expression, whether of movement or character. Here is a bit of Greek sculpture, with many folds; here is a bit of Christian sculpture with few.[1] From the many, not one could be removed without harm, and to the few, not one could be added. This alone is art, and no science will ever enable you to do this, but the poetic and fabric instincts only.

145. Nevertheless, however far above science, your work must comply with all the requirements of science. The first thing you have to ask is, Is it scientifically right? That is still nothing, but it is essential. In modern imitations of Gothic work the artists think it religious to be wrong, and that Heaven will be propitious only to saints whose stoles or petticoats stand or fall into incredible angles.

All that nonsense I will soon get well out of your heads by enabling you to make accurate studies from real drapery, so that you may be able to detect in a moment whether

[1] [Probably Ruskin here showed Mr. Macdonald's study of Greek drapery, No. 57 in the Rudimentary Series (Vol. XXI. p. 181), and a photograph (formerly No. 92 in the same series) of sculptures on the porch of St. Anastasia, Verona: see Vol. XXI. p. 195.]

the folds in any design are natural and true to the form, or artificial and ridiculous.

146. But this, which is the science of drapery, will never do more than guard you in your first attempts in the art of it. Nay, when once you have mastered the elements of such science, the most sickening of all work to you will be that in which the draperies are all right,—and nothing else is. In the present state of our schools one of the chief mean merits against which I shall have to warn you is the imitation of what milliners admire: nay, in many a piece of the best art I shall have to show you that the draperies are, to some extent, intentionally ill-done, *lest* you should look at them. Yet, through every complexity of desirableness, and counter-peril, hold to the constant and simple law I have always given you—that the best work must be right in the beginning, and lovely in the end.

147. Finally, observe that what is true respecting these simple forms of drapery is true of all other inorganic form. It must become organic under the artist's hand by his invention. As there must not be a fold in a vestment too few or too many, there must not, in noble landscape, be a fold in a mountain, too few or too many. As you will never get from real linen cloth, by copying it ever so faithfully, the drapery of a noble statue, so you will never get from real mountains, copy them never so faithfully, the forms of noble landscape. Anything more beautiful than the photographs of the Valley of Chamouni, now in your print-sellers' windows, cannot be conceived. For geographical and geological purposes they are worth anything; for art purposes, worth—a good deal less than zero.[1] You may learn much from them, and will mislearn more. But in Turner's "Valley of Chamouni"[2] the mountains have not a fold too much, nor too little. There are no such mountains at Chamouni: they are the ghosts of eternal mountains, such as have been, and shall be, for evermore.

[1] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 172 (Vol. XX. p. 164).]
[2] [The water-colour at Farnley; see Plate 3 in Vol. III. (p. 238).]

148. So now in sum, for I may have confused you by illustration,—

I. You are, in drawing, to try only to represent the appearances of things, never what you know the things to be.

II. Those appearances you are to test by the appliance of the scientific laws relating to aspect; and to learn, by accurate measurement, and the most fixed attention, to represent with absolute fidelity.

III. Having learned to represent actual appearances faithfully, if you have any human faculty of your own, visionary appearances will take place to you which will be nobler and more true than any actual or material appearances; and the realization of these is the function of every fine art, which is founded absolutely, therefore, in truth, and consists absolutely in imagination. And once more we may conclude with, but now using them in a deeper sense, the words of our master—"The best in this kind are but shadows."[1]

It is to be our task, gentlemen, to endeavour that they may be at least so much.

[1] [See above, p. 152; and below, p. 485.]

# LECTURE VIII

## THE RELATION TO ART OF THE SCIENCES OF ORGANIC FORM

*March 2nd*, 1872

149. I HAVE next in order to speak of the relation of art to science, in dealing with its own principal subject—organic form, as the expression of life. And, as in my former lecture, I will tell you at once what I wish chiefly to enforce upon you.

First,—but this I shall have no time to dwell upon,—That the true power of art must be founded on a general knowledge of organic nature, not of the human frame only.

Secondly.—That in representing this organic nature, quite as much as in representing inanimate things, Art has nothing to do with structures, causes, or absolute facts; but only with appearances.

Thirdly.—That in representing these appearances, she is more hindered than helped by the knowledge of things which do not externally appear; and therefore, that the study of anatomy generally, whether of plants, animals, or man, is an impediment to graphic art.

Fourthly.—That especially in the treatment and conception of the human form, the habit of contemplating its anatomical structure is not only a hindrance, but a degradation; and farther yet, that even the study of the external form of the human body, more exposed than it may be healthily and decently in daily life, has been essentially destructive to every school of art in which it has been practised.

Titian

Hanfstaengel Photo
Allen & Co. Sc.

Daughter of Roberto Strozzi

150. These four statements I undertake, in the course of our future study, gradually to confirm to you. In a single lecture I, of course, have time to do little more than clearly state and explain them.

First, I tell you that art should take cognizance of all living things, and know them, so as to be able to name, that is to say, in the truest distinctive way, to describe them. The Creator daily brings, before the noblest of His creatures, every lower creature, that whatsoever Man calls it, may be the name thereof.[1]

Secondly.—In representing, nay, in thinking of, and caring for, these beasts, man has to think of them essentially with their skins on them, and with their souls in them. He is to know how they are spotted, wrinkled, furred, and feathered: and what the look of them is, in the eyes; and what grasp, or cling, or trot, or pat, in their paws and claws. He is to take every sort of view of them, in fact, except one,—the Butcher's view. He is never to think of them as bones and meat.

Thirdly.—In the representation of their appearance, the knowledge of bones and meat, of joint and muscle, is more a hindrance than a help.

Lastly.—With regard to the human form, such knowledge is a degradation as well as a hindrance; and even the study of the nude is injurious, beyond the limits of honour and decency in daily life.

Those are my four positions. I will not detain you by dwelling on the first two—that we should know every sort of beast, and know it with its skin on it, and its soul within it. What you feel to be a paradox—perhaps you think an incredible and insolent paradox—is my telling you that you will be hindered from doing this by the study of anatomy.[2] I address myself, therefore, only to the last two points.

151. Among your standard engravings, I have put that of the picture by Titian, in the Strozzi Palace, of a little

[1] [See Genesis ii. 19.]

[2] [For a summary of Ruskin's references in this connexion, see Vol. IV. p. 155 *n.*]

Strozzi maiden feeding her dog.[1] I am going to put in the Rudimentary Series, where you can always get at it (R. 125),[2] this much more delightful, though not in all points standard, picture by Reynolds, of an infant daughter of George the Third's, with her Skye terrier.

I have no doubt these dogs are the authentic pets, given in as true portraiture as their mistresses; and that the little Princess of Florence and Princess of England were both shown in the company which, at that age, they best liked; —the elder feeding her favourite, and the baby with her arms about the neck of hers.

But the custom of putting either the dog, or some inferior animal, to be either in contrast, or modest companionship, with the nobleness of human form and thought, is a piece of what may be called mental comparative anatomy, which has its beginning very far back in art indeed. One of quite the most interesting Greek vases in the British Museum is that of which the painting long went under the title of "Anacreon and his Dog."[3] It is a Greek lyric poet, singing with lifted head, in the action given to Orpheus and Philammon in their moments of highest inspiration; while, entirely unaffected by and superior to the music, there walks beside him a sharp-nosed and curly-tailed dog, painted in what the exclusive admirers of Greek art would, I suppose, call an ideal manner; that is to say, his tail is more like a display of fireworks than a tail; but the ideal evidently founded on the material existence of a charming, though supercilious animal, not unlike the one which is at present the chief solace of my labours in Oxford, Dr. Acland's

[1] [The upper example in No. 42 of the Standard Series (see Vol. XXI. p. 26). The picture (now at Berlin) is here reproduced (Plate XIX.).]

[2] [See Vol. XXI. p. 206. The picture (at Windsor) is here reproduced (Plate XX.).]

[3] [Of "Anacreon vases" there are several in the British Museum. The type represented is that of an elderly reveller, singing to a lyre. On one of the vases (E 18) the name "Anacreon" is inscribed, and the type suggests comparison with the statue of the poet described by Pausanias (i. 25, 1): "the attitude of the figure is suggestive of a man singing in his cups." The poet is often accompanied by his dog (*e.g.*, on E 314, and E 315), which, according to a mediæval commentator (Tzetzes), was famous for his fidelity to his master; as when accompanying the poet and a slave to market, the dog watched for several days a purse which the slave had dropped.]

Sir Joshua Reynolds P.R.A. Hanfstaengel Photo
Allen & Co. Sc.

The Princess Matilda Sophia

dog Bustle. I might go much farther back than this; but at all events, from the time of the golden dog of Pandareos,[1] the fawn of Diana, and the eagle, owl, and peacock of the great Greek gods, you find a succession of animal types—centralized in the Middle Ages, of course, by the hound and the falcon—used in art either to symbolize, or contrast with, dignity in human persons. In modern portraiture, the custom has become vulgarized by the anxiety of everybody who sends their picture, or their children's, to the Royal Academy, to have it demonstrated to the public by the exhibition of a pony, and a dog with a whip in its mouth, that they live, at the proper season, in a country house. But by the greater masters the thing is done always with a deep sense of the mystery of the comparative existences of living creatures, and of the methods of vice and virtue exhibited by them. Albert Dürer scarcely ever draws a scene in the life of the Virgin, without putting into the foreground some idle cherubs at play with rabbits or kittens;[2] and sometimes lets his love of the grotesque get entirely the better of him, as in the engraving of the Madonna with the monkey. Veronese disturbs the interview of the Queen of Sheba with Solomon, by the petulance of the Queen of Sheba's Blenheim spaniel, whom Solomon had not treated with sufficient respect;[3] and when Veronese is introduced himself, with all his family, to the Madonna, I am sorry to say that his own pet dog turns its back to the Madonna, and walks out of the room.[4]

152. But among all these symbolic playfulnesses of the higher masters, there is not one more perfect than this study by Reynolds of the infant English Princess with her wire-haired terrier. He has put out his whole strength to show the infinite differences, yet the blessed harmonies,

[1] [For this legend, and for the dog in mythology generally, see *Queen of the Air*, § 23 (Vol. XIX. p. 317); and for the fawn of Diana, see Vol. XX. p. 149.]

[2] [See woodcuts Nos. 20 and 24 in vol. iii. of the British Museum collection; and for the Madonna with the monkey, No. 42 in vol. i.]

[3] [See Ruskin's description of the picture in a letter given in Vol. XVI. p. xxxviii.; and for a reproduction of the picture itself, *ibid.*, p. 186.]

[4] [See the reproduction of Ruskin's copy of the picture in Vol. VII. p. 209.]

between the human and the lower nature. First, having a blue-eyed,* soft baby to paint, he gives its full face, as round as may be, and rounds its eyes to complete openness, because somebody is coming whom it does not know. But it opens its eyes in quiet wonder, and is not disturbed, but behaves as a princess should. Beside this soft, serenely-minded baby, Reynolds has put the roughest and roughest-minded dog he could think of. Instead of the full round eyes, you have only the dark places in the hair where you know the terrier's eyes must be — sharp enough, if you could see them—and very certainly seeing you, but not at all wondering at you, like the baby's. For the terrier has instantly made up his mind about you; and above all, that you have no business there; and is growling and snarling in his fiercest manner, though without moving from his mistress's side, or from under her arm. You have thus the full contrast between the grace and true charm of the child, who "thinketh no evil"[1] of you, and the uncharitable narrowness of nature in the grown-up dog of the world, who thinks nothing but evil of you. But the dog's virtue and faithfulness are not told less clearly; the baby evidently uses the creature just as much for a pillow as a playmate; —buries its arm in the rough hair of it with a loving confidence, half already converting itself to protection: and baby will take care of dog, and dog of baby, through all chances of time and fortune.

158. Now the exquisiteness with which the painter has applied all his skill in composition, all his dexterity in touch of pencil, and all his experience of the sources of expression, to complete the rendering of his comparison, cannot, in any of the finest subtleties of it, be explained; but the first steps of its science may be easily traced; and with

* I have not seen the picture: in the engraving the tint of the eyes would properly represent grey or blue.

[1] [1 Corinthians xiii. 5.]

little pains you may see how a simple and large mass of white is opposed to a rugged one of grey; how the child's face is put in front light, that no shadow may detract from the brightness which makes her, as in Arabian legends, "a princess like to the full moon"—how, in this halo, the lips and eyes are brought out in deep and rich colour, while scarcely a gleam of reflection is allowed to disturb the quietness of the eyes;—(the terrier's, you feel, would glitter enough, if you could see them, and flash back in shallow fire; but the princess's eyes are thinking, and do not flash;) —how the quaint cap surrounds, with its not wholly painless formalism, the courtly and patient face, opposed to the rugged and undressed wild one; and how the easy grace of soft limb and rounded neck is cast, in repose, against the uneasily gathered up crouching of the short legs, and petulant shrug of the eager shoulders, in the ignobler creature.

154. Now, in his doing of all this, Sir Joshua was thinking of, and seeing, whatever was best in the creatures, within and without. Whatever was most perfectly doggish —perfectly childish—in soul and body. The absolute truth of outer aspect, and of inner mind, he seizes infallibly; but there is one part of the creatures which he never, for an instant, thinks of, or cares for,—their bones. Do you suppose that, from first to last, in painting such a picture, it would ever enter Sir Joshua's mind to think what a dog's skull would look like, beside a baby's? The quite essential facts to him are those of which the skull gives no information—that the baby has a flattish pink nose, and the dog a bossy black one. You might dissect all the dead dogs in the water supply of London without finding out, what, as a painter, it is here your only business precisely to know, —what sort of shininess there is on the end of a terrier's nose; and for the position and action of the creatures, all the four doctors together, who set Bustle's leg for him the other day,[1] when he jumped out of a two-pair-of-stairs

[1] [Ruskin's dog Wisie took a similar leap: see *Præterita*, iii. § 27.]

window to bark at the volunteers, could not have told Sir Joshua how to make his crouching terrier look ready to snap, nor how to throw the child's arm over its neck in complete, yet not languid, rest.

155. Sir Joshua, then, does not think of, or care for, anatomy, in this picture; but if he had, would it have done him harm? You may easily see that the child's limbs are not drawn with the precision that Mantegna, Dürer, or Michael Angelo would have given them. Would some of their science not have bettered the picture?

I can show you exactly the sort of influence their science would have had.

In your Rudimentary Series, I have placed in sequence two of Dürer's most celebrated plates (R. 65, R. 66), the coat of arms with the skull, and the Madonna crowned by angels;[1] and that you may see precisely what qualities are, and are not, in this last, I have enlarged the head by photography, and placed it in your Reference Series (117). You will find the skull is perfectly understood, and exquisitely engraved, but the face, imperfectly understood and coarsely engraved. No man who has studied the skull as carefully as Dürer did, ever *could* engrave a face beautifully, for the perception of the bones continually thrusts itself upon him in wrong places, and in trying to conquer or modify it, he distorts the flesh. Where the features are marked, and full of character, he can quit himself of the impression; but in the rounded contour of women's faces he is always forced to think of the skull; and even in his ordinary work often draws more of bones and hair, than face.

156. I could easily give you more definite, but very disagreeable, proofs of the evil of knowing the anatomy of the human face too intimately: but will rather give you further evidence by examining the skull and face of the creature who has taught us so much already,—the eagle.

[1] [See Vol. XXI. p. 186.]

**Head of an Eagle**

Here is a slight sketch of the skull of the golden eagle.[1] It may be interesting to you sometimes to make such drawings roughly for the sake of the points of mechanical arrangement—as here in the circular bones of the eye-socket; but don't suppose that drawing these a million of times over will ever help you in the least to draw an eagle itself. On the contrary, it would almost to a certainty hinder you from noticing the essential point in an eagle's head—the projection of the brow. All the main work of the eagle's eye is, as we saw, in looking down.[2] To keep the sunshine above from teasing it, the eye is put under a triangular penthouse, which is precisely the most characteristic thing in the bird's whole aspect. Its hooked beak does not materially distinguish it from a cockatoo, but its hooded eye does. But that projection is not accounted for in the skull; and so little does the anatomist care about it, that you may hunt through the best modern works on ornithology, and you will find eagles drawn with all manner of dissections of skulls, claws, clavicles, sternums, and gizzards; but you won't find so much as one poor falcon drawn with a falcon's eye.

157. But there is another quite essential point in an eagle's head, in comprehending which, again, the skull will not help us. The skull in the human creature fails in three essential points. It is eyeless, noseless, and lipless. It fails only in an eagle in the two points of eye and lip; for an eagle has no nose worth mentioning; his beak is only a prolongation of his jaws. But he has lips very much worth mentioning, and of which his skull gives no account. One misses them much from a human skull:—"Here hung those lips that I have kissed, I know not how oft,"[3]—but from an eagle's you miss them more, for he is distinct from other birds in having with his own eagle's eye, a dog's lips, or

[1] [The sketch of the skull is not in the Oxford Collection. The drawing by Ruskin here reproduced (Plate XXI.) is the lower of two drawings which are No. 165 in the Educational Series; the upper is Plate XLI. in Vol. XXI. p. 179.]

[2] [See above, § 111, p. 201; and compare "The Eagle of Elis," §§ 9–11 (Vol. XX. pp. 400, 401).]

[3] [*Hamlet*, v. 1, 208.]

very nearly such; an entirely fleshy and ringent mouth, bluish pink, with a perpetual grin upon it.

So that if you look, not at his skull, but at him, attentively enough, you will precisely get Æschylus's notion of him, essential in the Greek mind—*πτηνὸς κύων δαφοινὸς αἰετός*[1] —and then, if you want to see the use of his beak or bill, as distinguished from a dog's teeth, take a drawing from the falconry of the Middle Ages, and you will see how a piece of flesh becomes a *rag* to him, a thing to tear up,—*διαρταμήσει σώματος μέγα ῥάκος*.[2] There you have it precisely, in a falcon I got out of Mr. Coxe's favourite fourteenth-century missal.[3]

Now look through your natural history books from end to end; see if you can find one drawing, with all their anatomy, which shows you either the eagle's eye, his lips, or this essential use of his beak, so as to enable you thoroughly to understand those two lines of Æschylus: then, look at this Greek eagle on a coin of Elis, R. 50,[4] and this Pisan one, in marble, Edu. 131,[5] and you will not doubt any more that it is better to look at the living birds, than to cut them to pieces.

158. Anatomy, then,—I will assume that you grant, for the moment, as I will assuredly prove to you eventually,—will not help us to draw the true appearances of things. But may it not add to our intelligent conception of their nature?

So far from doing this, the anatomical study which has, to our much degradation and misfortune, usurped the place, and taken the name, at once of art and of natural history, has produced the most singularly mischievous effect on the

[1] [*Prometheus Vinctus*, 1043; compare "The Eagle of Elis," § 11 (Vol. XX. p. 401).]

[2] [*Ibid.*, 1044.]

[3] [See Educational Series, No. 167 (Vol. XXI. p. 89). Henry Octavius Coxe (1811–1881), Librarian of the Bodleian Library, 1860–1881, a "much-loved friend" of Ruskin (see, in a later volume, the Preface, § 2, to *A Protest against the Extension of Railways in the Lake District*.]

[4] [Rudimentary Series, No. 50 (Vol. XXI. p. 179).]

[5] [Educational Series, No. 163 (Vol. XXI. p. 89). For a similar Italian eagle, see Plate G in Vol. XX. (p. 402).]

faculty of delineation with respect to different races of animals. In all recent books on natural history, you will find the ridiculous and ugly creatures done well, the noble and beautiful creatures done, I do not say merely ill, but in no wise. You will find the law hold universally that apes, pigs, rats, weasels, foxes, and the like,—but especially apes,—are drawn admirably; but not a stag, not a lamb, not a horse, not a lion;—the nobler the creature, the more stupidly it is always drawn, not from feebleness of art power, but a far deadlier fault than that—a total want of sympathy with the noble qualities of any creature, and a loathsome delight in their disgusting qualities. And this law is so thoroughly carried out that the great French historian of the mammalia, St. Hilaire, chooses, as his single example of the highest of the race, the most nearly bestial type he can find, human, in the world.[1] Let no girl ever look at the book, nor any youth who is willing to take my word; let those who doubt me, look at the example he has given of womankind.

159. But admit that this is only French anatomy, or ill-studied anatomy, and that, rightly studied, as Dr. Acland, for instance, would teach it us, it might do us some kind of good.

I must reserve for my lectures on the school of Florence[2] any analysis of the effect of anatomical study on European art and character; you will find some notice of it in my lecture on Michael Angelo;[3] and in the course of that analysis, it will be necessary for me to withdraw the statement made in the *Stones of Venice*, that anatomical science was helpful to great men, though harmful to mean ones.[4] I am now certain that the greater the intellect, the more

[1] [The reference is to the plate of the Bushman type at the beginning of vol. i. of *Histoire Naturelle des Mammifères*, by Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire and Frédéric Cuvier, 1824.]

[2] [That is, the course which next followed *The Eagle's Nest*, on "Sandro Botticelli and the Florentine Schools of Engraving"; published as *Ariadne Florentina*: see below, pp. 407 *seq.*]

[3] [*The Relation of Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, §§ 23 *seq.* (above, pp. 97 *seq.*]

[4] [See Vol. XI. p. 70.]

fatal are the forms of degradation to which it becomes liable in the course of anatomical studies; and that to Michael Angelo, of all men, the mischief was greatest, in destroying his religious passion and imagination, and leading him to make every spiritual conception subordinate to the display of his knowledge of the body. To-day, however, I only wish to give you my reasons for withdrawing anatomy from your course of study in these schools.

160. I do so, first, simply with reference to our time, convenience, and systematic method. It has become a habit with drawing-masters to confuse this particular science of anatomy with their own art of drawing, though they confuse no other science with that art. Admit that, in order to draw a tree, you should have a knowledge of botany: Do you expect me to teach you botany here? Whatever I want you to know of it I shall send you to your Professor of Botany and to the Botanic Gardens, to learn. I may, perhaps, give you a rough sketch of the lines of timber in a bough, but nothing more.

So again, admit that, to draw a stone, you need a knowledge of geology. I have told you that you do not,[1] but admit it. Do you expect me to teach you, here, the relations between quartz and oxide of iron; or between the Silurian and Permian systems?[2] If you care about them, go to Professor Phillips,[3] and come back to me when you know them.

And, in like manner, admit that, to draw a man, you want the knowledge of his bones:—you do not; but admit that you do. Why should you expect me, here, to teach you the most difficult of all the sciences? If you want to know it, go to an hospital, and cut dead bodies to pieces till you are satisfied; then come to me, and I'll make a shift to teach you to draw, even then—though your eyes and

[1] [See above, p. 211.]

[2] [Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 95, where Ruskin again dismisses from his scope inquiries into these divisions of the Palæozoic strata.]

[3] [John Phillips (1800–1874), Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, 1854–1870; Professor of Geology. Compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 111 (below, p. 366), and Vol. XVI. p. li.]

memory will be full of horrible things which Heaven never meant you so much as a glance at. But don't expect me to help you in that ghastly work: any more than among the furnaces and retorts in Professor Maskelyne's laboratory.[1]

161. Let us take one more step in the logical sequence. You do not, I have told you, need either chemistry, botany, geology, or anatomy, to enable you to understand art, or produce it. But there is one science which you *must* be acquainted with. You must very intensely and thoroughly know—how to behave. You cannot so much as feel the difference between two casts of drapery, between two tendencies of line,—how much less between dignity and baseness of gesture,—but by your own dignity of character. But, though this is an essential science, and although I cannot teach you to lay one line beside another rightly, unless you have this science, you don't expect me in these schools to teach you how to behave, if you happen not to know it before!

162. Well, here is one reason, and a sufficiently logical one, as you will find it on consideration, for the exclusion of anatomical study from *all* drawing-schools. But there is a more cogent reason than this for its exclusion, especially from elementary drawing-schools. It may be sometimes desirable that a student should see, as I said, how very unlike a face a skull is; and at a leisure moment he may, without much harm, observe the equivocation between knees and ankles by which it is contrived that his legs, if properly made at the joints, will only bend backwards, but a crane's forwards. But that a young boy, or girl, brought up fresh to the schools of art from the country, should be set to stare, against every particle of wholesome grain in their natures, at the Elgin Marbles, and to draw them with dismal application, until they imagine they like them, makes the whole youthful temper rotten with affectation, and sickly with strained and ambitious fancy. It is still worse for

[1] [Keeper of the Mineralogical Department at the British Museum; also Professor of Mineralogy at Oxford, 1856–1895. For another reference to him, see Vol. XIX. p. 229.]

young persons to be compelled to endure the horror of the dissecting-room, or to be made familiar with the conditions of actual bodily form, in a climate where the restraints of dress must for ever prevent the body from being perfect in contour, or regarded with entirely simple feeling.

168. I have now, perhaps too often for your patience, told you that you must always draw for the sake of your subject—never for the sake of your picture.[1] What you wish to see in reality, that you should make an effort to show, in pictures and statues; what you do not wish to see in reality, you should not try to draw.

But there is, I suppose, a very general impression on the mind of persons interested in the arts, that because nations living in cold climates are necessarily unfamiliar with the sight of the naked body, therefore, art should take it upon herself to show it them; and that they will be elevated in thought, and made more simple and grave in temper, by seeing, at least in colour and marble, what the people of the south saw in its verity.

164. I have neither time nor inclination to enter at present into discussion of the various effects, on the morality of nations, of more or less frank showing of the nude form. There is no question that if shown at all, it should be shown fearlessly, and seen constantly; but I do not care at present to debate the question: neither will I delay you by any expression of my reasons for the rule I am about to give. Trust me, I have many; and I can assert to you as a positive and perpetual law, that so much of the nude body as in the daily life of the nation may be shown with modesty, and seen with reverence and delight, —so much, and no more, ought to be shown by the national arts, either of painting or sculpture. What, more than this, either art exhibits, will, assuredly, pervert taste, and, in all probability, morals.

165. It will, assuredly, pervert taste in this essential

[1] [See *Lectures on Landscape*, §§ 13, 27 (above, pp. 20, 28).]

point, that the polite ranks of the nation will come to think the *living* creature and its dress exempt from the highest laws of taste; and that while a man or woman must, indeed, be seen dressed or undressed with dignity, in marble, they may be dressed or undressed, if not with *in*dignity, at least, with less than dignity, in the ball-room, and the street. Now the law of all living art is that the man and woman must be more beautiful than their pictures, and their pictures as decorous as the living man or woman; and that real dress, and gesture, and behaviour, should be more graceful than any marble or colour can effect similitude of.

166. Thus the idea of a different dress in art and reality, of which that of art is to be the ideal one, perverts taste in dress; and the study of the nude which is rarely seen, as much perverts taste in art.

Of all pieces of art that I know, skilful in execution, and not criminal in intention;—without any exception, quite the most vulgar, and in the solemn sense of the word, most abominable, are the life studies which are said to be the best made in modern times,—those of Mulready, exhibited as models in the Kensington Museum.[1]

167. How far the study of the seldom-seen nude leads to perversion of morals, I will not, to-day, inquire; but I beg you to observe that even among the people where it was most frank and pure, it unquestionably led to evil far greater than any good which demonstrably can be traced to it. Scarcely any of the moral power of Greece depended on her admiration of beauty, or strength in the body. The power of Greece depended on practice in military exercise, involving severe and continual ascetic discipline of the senses; on a perfect code of military heroism and patriotic honour; on the desire to live by the laws of an admittedly divine justice; and on the vivid conception of the presence of spiritual beings. The mere admiration of physical beauty

[1] [For another reference to these studies, see *Val d'Arno*, § 16 (Vol. XXIII. p. 18); for Mulready generally, see General Index.]

in the body, and the arts which sought its expression, not only conduced greatly to the fall of Greece, but were the cause of errors and crimes in her greatest time, which must for ever sadden our happiest thoughts of her, and have rendered her example almost useless to the future.[1]

168. I have named four causes of her power; discipline of senses; romantic ideal of heroic honour; respect for justice; and belief in God. There was a fifth—the most precious of all—the belief in the purity and force of life in man; and that true reverence for domestic affection, which, in the strangest way, being the essential strength of every nation under the sun, had yet been lost sight of as the chief element of Greek virtue, though the *Iliad* itself is nothing but the story of the punishment of the rape of Helen; and though every Greek hero called himself chiefly by his paternal name,—Tydides, rather than Diomed;—Pelides, rather than Achilles.

Among the new knowledges which the modern sirens tempt you to pursue, the basest and darkest is the endeavour to trace the origin of life, otherwise than in Love. Pardon me, therefore, if I give you a piece of theology to-day: it is a science much closer to your art than anatomy.

169. All of you who have ever read your Gospels carefully must have wondered, sometimes, what could be the meaning of those words,—"If any speak against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven; but if against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the next."[2]

The passage may have many meanings which I do not know; but one meaning I know positively, and I tell you so just as frankly as I would that I knew the meaning of a verse in Homer.

Those of you who still go to chapel say every day your creed; and, I suppose, too often, less and less every

[1] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 92 (Vol. XX. p. 91).]
[2] [Matthew xii. 31, 32.]

day believing it. Now, you may cease to believe two articles of it, and,—admitting Christianity to be true,—still be forgiven. But I can tell you—you must *not* cease to believe the third!

You begin by saying that you believe in an Almighty Father. Well, you may entirely lose the sense of that Fatherhood, and yet be forgiven.

You go on to say that you believe in a Saviour Son. You may entirely lose the sense of that Sonship, and yet be forgiven.

But the third article—disbelieve if you dare!

"I believe in the Holy Ghost, *the Lord and Giver of life.*"

Disbelieve that; and your own being is degraded into the state of dust driven by the wind; and the elements of dissolution have entered your very heart and soul.

All Nature, with one voice—with one glory,—is set to teach you reverence for the life communicated to you from the Father of Spirits. The song of birds, and their plumage; the scent of flowers, their colour, their very existence, are in direct connection with the mystery of that communicated life: and all the strength, and all the arts of men, are measured by, and founded upon, their reverence for the passion, and their guardianship of the purity, of Love.

170. Gentlemen,—the word by which I at this moment address you—by which it is the first of all your duties through life, to permit all men to address you with truth—that epithet of "gentle," as you well know, indicates the intense respect for race and fatherhood—for family dignity and chastity,—which was visibly the strength of Rome, as it had been, more disguisedly, the strength of Greece. But have you enough noticed that your Saxon word "kindness" has exactly the same relation to "kin," and to the Chaucerian "kind," that "gentle" has to "gentilis"?[1]

Think out that matter a little, and you will find that—

[1] [See Vol. XVIII. p. 476.]

much as it looks like it—neither chemistry, nor anatomy, nor republicanism, are going to have it all their own way —in the making of either beasts, or gentlemen. They look sometimes, indeed, as if they had got as far as two of the Mosaic plagues, and manufactured frogs in the ditches, and lice on the land; but their highest boasters will not claim, yet, so much even as that poor victory.

171. My friends, let me very strongly recommend you to give up that hope of finding the principle of life in dead bodies; but to take all pains to keep the life pure and holy in the living bodies you have got; and, farther, not to seek your national amusement in the destruction of animals, nor your national safety in the destruction of men; but to look for all your joy to kindness, and for all your strength to domestic faith, and law of ancestral honour. Perhaps you will not now any more think it strange that in beginning your natural history studies in this place, I mean to teach you heraldry, but not anatomy. For, as you learn to read the shields, and remember the stories, of the great houses of England, and find how all the arts that glorified them were founded on the passions that inspired, you will learn assuredly, that the utmost secret of national power is in living with honour, and the utmost secrets of human art are in gentleness and truth.

# LECTURE IX

## THE STORY OF THE HALCYON

*March 7th,* 1872[1]

172. I MUST to-day briefly recapitulate the purport of the preceding lectures, as we are about now to enter on a new branch of our subject.

I stated, in the first two, that the wisdom of art and the wisdom of science consisted in their being each devoted unselfishly to the service of men; in the third, that art was only the shadow of our knowledge of facts; and that the

[1] [The lecture on the Halcyon had already been delivered in part at Woolwich, on January 13, 1872, under the title "The Bird of Calm." The introductory passage, preserved among Ruskin's MSS. and specially marked by him as important, was as follows:—

"In the old quiet days of England, which I can but just remember, when it was possible to eat one's dinner without receiving a telegram, and when one might sometimes pass a whole day without hearing the least bit of news, remaining content with the information one had received up to that time of life—in that benumbed and senseless period, little as you may now be able to fancy it, though nobody could be violently carried about in iron boxes, many people took what they called walks, and enjoyed them. And quite within access, in that torpid manner, from my own home—within access also through pleasant fields and picturesque lanes—there used to be a pastoral valley called the valley of the Stream, or Bourne, of the Raven. This word Bourne has, as you probably know, two meanings in old English, of which only one, that of limit or end to be reached—the Bourne from which no traveller returns—has remained, and that only in poetical use, to our time. But the more frequent meaning of it in early English was that of a small gently flowing, but quite brightly flowing stream; and when you find the names of villages ending with that word—Ashbourne, Sittingbourne, or, as in an instance with which we are all now much too familiar, Tichbourne—it always means that the village stood beside a streamlet. If you collect out of any large part of the map of England the names that end thus in bourne or burn; then those that end plainly in brook—Colnbrook, Carisbrook, and the like; then add to these all the fords—Oxford, Wallingford, Ashford, Brentford, and so on; then the bridges—Cambridge, Tunbridge, Ivybridge, Ferrybridge; then the wells—Holywell, Clerkenwell, Camberwell; and, to conclude, all the wiches—Norwich, Droitwich, Greenwich, and Woolwich (wich in old English meaning a spring)—you will get a singular impression of the distinctive character of your country as one of running waters, by which many people could

reality was always to be acknowledged as more beautiful than the shadow. In the fourth lecture I endeavoured to show that the wise modesty of art and science lay in attaching due value to the power and knowledge of other people, when greater than our own; and in the fifth, that the wise self-sufficiency of art and science lay in a proper enjoyment of our own knowledge and power, after it was thus modestly esteemed. The sixth lecture stated that sight was a distinctly spiritual power, and that its kindness or tenderness was proportioned to its clearness. Lastly, in

> happily dwell, and which in their intercourse with each other they were continually fording, or crossing by bridges.
>
> "Now this character, observe, is very rare in the world—the rarest of all the pleasant kinds of habitation. Hot countries there are, many with scarcely any water at all, and cold countries with too much—neither of them pleasantly habitable. The snows of the Norwegian and Swiss Alps and the moist moorlands of Scotland trickle down in perpetual rivulets or burns or torrents, but these are either too small or too fierce to give any local interest to their fords, or to be bridged except in chosen places—you either leap over a mountain torrent anywhere, from stone to stone, or if you cannot, you must get the Devil to build a bridge for you; but in your English stream you look where it makes 'the netted sunbeams dance,' and there you can ford the 'sandy shallow,' or from willow to willow of its bank you can build your rustic bridge.
>
> "And in a country of this kind you have always the power of surrounding yourselves with beautiful flowers and beautiful animals, gardens filled with blossoms of every hue, pools and fields inhabited by fish and fowl of every name. There is scarcely anything delightful in animal life that you may not see living and tame; you can't have exceedingly venomous serpents; you can't have crocodiles; you can't have, except in dens for show, tigers and lions; you must do even without wild elephants. But everything that is pretty, that flies or walks or swims, you may have to look at for nothing, and to eat, for only the trouble or pleasure of catching. Keep your streams pure; let Mr. Frank Buckland manage them; let your boys learn a little natural history in a pleasant way, and when they can pass a moderately severe, not competitive, examination on it, for prize give them a fishing-rod and a holiday once a week, a good long day that they may ramble in as far as they like, and you might all have trout for breakfast and sprats for supper. And for birds, there isn't a feathered creature that wades or sings which you mightn't make your streams lively with and your woods musical. This very stream, between Woolwich and Denmark Hill, which now is little more than a large drain through Lewisham, I don't know a scene in the world more lovely than its valley must once have been, running up into the steep wooded hills near Bromley, which perhaps had nests of the raven among them enough and to spare, but by the stream itself must have lived the heron and halcyon. It is of this last bird that I want to tell you the story to-night, and something else also of the great class to which it and the raven both belong—a class, strangely enough, lost in the arrangement of modern ornithologists, but of immense importance in ancient history and the myths connected with it."

The words in inverted commas are from Tennyson's *The Brook*. For the references in the last passage see the matter now added to *Love's Meinie*.]

the seventh and eighth lectures, I asserted that this spiritual sight, concerned with external aspects of things, was the source of all necessary knowledge in art; and that the artist has no concern with invisible structures, organic or inorganic.

178. No concern with invisible structures. But much with invisible things; with passion, and with historical association. And in these two closing lectures, I hope partly to justify myself for pressing on your attention some matters as little hitherto thought of in drawing-schools, as the exact sciences have been highly, and, I believe, unjustly, esteemed;—mythology, namely, and heraldry.

I can but in part justify myself now. Your experience of the interest which may be found in these two despised sciences will be my best justification. But to-day (as we are about to begin our exercises in bird-drawing) I think it may interest you to review some of the fables connected with the natural history of a single bird, and to consider what effect the knowledge of such tradition is likely to have on our mode of regarding the animated creation in general.

174. Let us take an instance of the feeling towards birds which is especially characteristic of the English temper at this day, in its entire freedom from superstition.

You will find in your Rudimentary Series (225),[1] Mr. Gould's plate of the lesser Egret,—the most beautiful, I suppose, of all birds that visit, or, at least, once visited, our English shores. Perfectly delicate in form, snow-white in plumage, the feathers like frost-work of dead silver, exquisitely slender, separating in the wind like the streams of a fountain, the creature looks a living cloud rather than a bird.

It may be seen often enough in South France and Italy. The last (or last but one?) known of in England came thirty years ago, and this was its reception, as

[1] [See Vol. XXI. p. 228.]

related by the present happy possessor of its feathers and bones:—

"The little Egret in my possession is a most beautiful specimen: it was killed by a labourer with a stick, in Ake Carr, near Beverley, about 1840, and was brought to me, tied up, in a pocket-handkerchief, covered with black wet mud and blood, in which state it was sent to Mr. Reed, of Doncaster, and restored by him in a most marvellous manner."[1]

175. Now, you will feel at once that, while the peasant was beating this bird into a piece of bloody flesh with his stick, he could not, in any true sense, see the bird; that he had no pleasure either in the sight of that, or of anything near it.

You feel that he would become capable of seeing it in exact proportion to his desire not to kill it;[2] but to watch it in its life.

Well, that is a quite general law: in the degree in which you delight in the life of any creature, you can see it; no otherwise.

And you would feel, would you not, that if you could enable the peasant rightly to see the bird, you had in great part educated him?

176. You would certainly have gone, at least, the third of the way towards educating him. Then the next thing to be contrived would be that he should be able to see a man rightly, as well as a bird; to understand and love what was good in a man, so that supposing his master was a good man, the sight of his master should be a joy to him. You would say that he was therein better educated than if he wanted to put a gun through a hedge and shoot his master.

Then the last part of education will be—whatever is meant by that beatitude of the pure in heart—seeing God rightly,[3] of which I shall not speak to-day.

[1] [Quoted from information given by "James Hall, Esq., of Scarboro, Beverley, in Yorkshire," in Gould's *Birds of Great Britain*, vol. iv. Plate 23.]

[2] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 23 (Vol. XX. p. 35).]

[3] [See above, § 121, p. 207.]

177. And in all these phases of education, the main point, you observe, is that it *should* be a beatitude: and that a man should learn "χαίρειν ὀρθῶς": [1] and this rejoicing is above all things to be in actual sight; you have the truth exactly in the saying of Dante when he is brought before Beatrice, in heaven, that his eyes "satisfied themselves for their ten years' thirst." [2]

This, then, I repeat, is the sum of education. All literature, art, and science are vain, and worse, if they do not enable you to be glad; and glad justly.

And I feel it distinctly my duty, though with solemn and true deference to the masters of education in this university, to say that I believe our modern methods of teaching, and especially the institution of severe and frequent examination, to be absolutely opposed to this great end; and that the result of competitive labour [3] in youth is infallibly to make men know all they learn wrongly, and hate the habit of learning; so that instead of coming to Oxford to rejoice in their work, men look forward to the years they are to pass under her teaching as a deadly agony, from which they are fain to escape, and sometimes for their life, *must* escape, into any method of sanitary frivolity.

178. I go back to my peasant and his egret. You all think with some horror of this man, beating the bird to death, as a brutal person. He is so; but how far are we English gentlemen, as a body, raised above him? We are more delicately nurtured, and shrink from the notion of bruising the creature and spoiling its feathers. That is so far right, and well. But in all probability this countryman, rude and cruel though he might be, had some other object in the rest of his day than the killing of birds. And very earnestly I ask you, have English gentlemen, as a class, any other real object in their whole existence than killing birds? If they discern a duty, they will indeed do it to

[1] [See *Aratra Pentelici*, § 12 (Vol. XX. p. 209).]
[2] [*Purgatorio*, xxxii. 2.]
[3] [Compare p. 148, above.]

the death; but have the English aristocracy at this moment any clear notion of their duty? I believe solemnly, and without jest, their idea of their caste is that its life should be, distinctively from inferior human lives, spent in shooting.

And that is not an idea of caste with which England, at this epoch, can any longer be governed.

179. I have no time to-day to push my argument farther; but I have said enough, I think, to induce you to bear with me in the statement of my main theorem—that reading and writing are in no sense education, unless they contribute to this end of making us feel kindly towards all creatures; but that drawing, and especially physiologic drawing, is vital education of a most precious kind. Farther, that more good would be done by any English nobleman who would keep his estate lovely in its native wildness; and let every animal live upon it in peace that chose to come there, than will be done, as matters are going now, by the talk of all the Lords in Parliament as long as we live to listen to them; and I will even venture to tell you my hope, though I shall be dead long before its possible fulfilment, that one day the English people will, indeed, so far recognize what education means as to surround this university with the loveliest park in England, twenty miles square; that they will forbid, in that environment, every unclean, mechanical, and vulgar trade and manufacture, as any man would forbid them in his own garden;—that they will abolish every base and ugly building, and nest of vice and misery, as they would cast out a devil;—that the streams of the Isis and Cherwell will be kept pure and quiet among their fields and trees; and that, within this park, every English wild flower that can bloom in lowland will be suffered to grow in luxuriance, and every living creature that haunts wood and stream know that it has happy refuge.

And now to our immediate work.

180. The natural history of anything, or of any creature, divides itself properly into three branches.

We have first to collect and examine the traditions respecting the thing, so that we may know what the effect of its existence has hitherto been on the minds of men, and may have at our command what data exist to help us in our inquiries about it, or to guide us in our own thoughts of it.

We have secondly to examine and describe the thing, or creature, in its actual state, with utmost attainable veracity of observation.

Lastly, we have to examine under what laws of chemistry and physics the matter of which the thing is made has been collected and constructed.

Thus we have first to know the poetry of it—*i.e.*, what it has been to man, or what man has made of it.

Secondly, the actual facts of its existence.

Thirdly, the physical causes of these facts, if we can discover them.

181. Now, it is customary, and may be generally advisable, to confine the term "natural history" to the last two branches of knowledge only. I do not care what we call the first branch; but, in the accounts of animals that I prepare for my schools at Oxford, the main point with me will be the mythology of them; the second, their actual state and aspect (second, this, because almost always hitherto only half known); and the anatomy and chemistry of their bodies, I shall very rarely, and partially, as I told you,[1] examine at all: but I shall take the greatest pains to get at the creature's habits of life; and know all its ingenuities, humours, delights, and intellectual powers. That is to say, what art it has, and what affection; and how these are prepared for in its external form.

182. I say, deliberately and energetically, "prepared for," in opposition to the idea, too prevalent in modern philosophy, of the form's being fortuitously developed by repetition of impulse. It is of course true that the aspects and

[1] [See above, §§ 150, 156, pp. 223, 229.]

characters of stones, flowers, birds, beasts, and men, are inseparably connected with the conditions under which they are appointed to have existence; but the method of this connection is infinitely varied; so far from fortuitous, it appears grotesquely, often terrifically arbitrary; and neither stone, flower, beast, nor man can understand any single reason of the arbitrament, or comprehend why its Creator made it thus.

183. To take the simplest of instances,—which happens also to be one of the most important to you as artists,—it is appointed that vertebrated animals shall have no more than four legs, and that, if they require to fly, the two legs in front must become wings, it being against law that they should have more than these four members in ramification from the spine.

Can any law be conceived more arbitrary, or more apparently causeless? What strongly planted three-legged animals there might have been! what symmetrically radiant five-legged ones! what volatile six-winged ones! what circumspect seven-headed ones! Had Darwinism been true, we should long ago have split our heads in two with foolish thinking, or thrust out, from above our covetous hearts, a hundred desirous arms and clutching hands; and changed ourselves into Briarean Cephalopoda.[1] But the law is around us, and within; unconquerable; granting, up to a certain limit, power over our bodies to circumstance and will; beyond that limit, inviolable, inscrutable, and, so far as we know, eternal.

184. For every lower animal, similar laws are established; under the grasp of these it is capable of change, in visibly permitted oscillation between certain points; beyond which, according to present experience, it cannot pass. The adaptation of the instruments it possesses in its members to the conditions of its life is always direct, and occasionally beautiful; but in the plurality of instances, partial, and

[1] [Compare Vol. XVII. p. 169 *n.*]

involving painful supplementary effort. Some animals have to dig with their noses, some to build with their tails, some to spin with their stomachs: their dexterities are usually few —their awkwardnesses numberless;—a lion is continually puzzled how to hold a bone; and an eagle can scarcely pull the meat off one, without upsetting himself.

185. Respecting the origin of these variously awkward, imperfectly, or grotesquely developed phases of form and power, you need not at present inquire: in all probability the race of man is appointed to live in wonder, and in acknowledgment of ignorance; but if ever he is to know any of the secrets of his own or of brutal existence, it will assuredly be through discipline of virtue, not through inquisitiveness of science. I have just used the expression, "had Darwinism been true," implying its fallacy more positively than is justifiable in the present state of our knowledge; but very positively I can say to you that I have never heard yet one logical argument in its favour, and I have heard, and read, many that were beneath contempt. For instance, by the time you have copied one or two of your exercises on the feather of the halcyon,[1] you will be more interested in the construction and disposition of plume-filaments than heretofore; and you may, perhaps, refer, in hope of help, to Mr. Darwin's account of the peacock's feather.[2] I went to it myself, hoping to learn some of the existing laws of life which regulate the local disposition of the colour. But none of these appear to be known; and I am informed only that peacocks have grown to be peacocks out of brown pheasants, because the young feminine brown pheasants like fine feathers. Whereupon I say to myself, "Then either there was a distinct species of brown pheasants originally born with a taste for fine feathers; and therefore with remarkable eyes in their heads,—which would be a much more wonderful distinction of species than being born with remarkable eyes in their tails,—or else all

[1] [Rudimentary Series, Nos. 203–205: see Vol. XXI. pp. 227–228.]
[2] [*Descent of Man*, pt. ii. ch. xiii. Compare *Proserpina*, i. ch. v.]

pheasants would have been peacocks by this time!" And I trouble myself no more about the Darwinian theory.

When you have drawn some of the actual patterns of plume and scale with attention, I believe you will see reason to think that spectra of organic species may be at least as distinct as those of metals or gases; but learn at all events what they are now, and never mind what they have been.

186. Nor need you care for methods of classification any more than for the origin of classes. Leave the physiologists to invent names, and dispute over them; your business is to know the creature, not the name of it momentarily fashionable in scientific circles. What practical service you can get from the order at present adopted, take, without contention; and as far as possible, use English words, or be sure you understand the Latin ones.[1]

187. For instance, the order at present adopted in arranging the species of birds, is, as you know, founded only on their ways of using their feet.[2]

Some catch or snatch their prey, and are called "Snatchers"—RAPTORES.

Some perch on branches, and are called "Insitters," or "Upon-sitters"—INSESSORES.

Some climb and cling on branches, and are called "Climbers"—SCANSORES.

Some scratch the ground, and are called "Scratchers"—RASORES.

Some stand or wade in shallow water, and, having long legs, are called "Stilt-walkers"—GRALLATORES.

Some float, and make oars of their feet, and are called "Swimmers"—NATATORES.

188. This classification is unscholarly, because there are many snatchers and scratchers who perch as well as the sitters; and many of the swimmers sit, when ashore, more neatly than the sitters themselves; and are most grave insessors, in long rows, on rock or sand: also, "insessor"

[1] [On scientific nomenclature "less easily understood and therefore more scientific," see *Ethics of the Dust*, § 46 (Vol. XVIII. p. 258).]

[2] [Compare the classification adopted by Ruskin in *Love's Meinie*, §§ 81 *seq.*]

does not mean properly a sitter, but a besieger; and it is awkward to call a bird a "Rasor." Still, the use of the feet is (on the whole) characteristic, and convenient for first rough arrangement; only, in general reference, it will be better to use plain English words than those stiff Latin ones, or their ugly translations. Linnæus, for all his classes except the stilt-walkers, used the name of the particular birds which were the best types of their class;[1] he called the snatchers "hawks" (Accipitres), the swimmers, geese (Anseres), the scratchers, fowls (Gallinae), and the perchers, sparrows (Passeres). He has no class of climbers; but he has one since omitted by Cuvier,[2] "pies," which, for certain mythological reasons presently to be noted,[3] I will ask you to keep. This will give you seven orders, altogether, to be remembered; and for each of these we will take the name of its most representative bird. The hawk has best right undoubtedly to stand for the snatchers; we will have his adversary, the heron, for the stilt-walkers; you will find this very advisable, no less than convenient; because some of the beaks of the stilt-walkers turn down, and some turn up; but the heron's is straight, and so he stands well as a pure middle type. Then, certainly, gulls will better represent the swimmers than geese; and pheasants are a prettier kind of scratchers than fowls. We will take parrots for the climbers, magpies for the pies, and sparrows for the perchers. Then take them in this order: Hawks, parrots, pies, sparrows, pheasants, gulls, herons; and you can then easily remember them. For you have hawks at one end, the herons at the other, and sparrows in the middle, with pies on one side and pheasants opposite, for which arrangement you will find there is good reason; then the parrots necessarily go beside the hawks, and the gulls beside the herons.

189. The bird whose mythic history I am about to read

[1] [See his *Systema Naturæ*, 1735.]

[2] [See *The Animal Kingdom, by Baron Cuvier, translated from the latest French edition*, 1834, vol. i. p. 208 *n.*: "I was obliged to suppress the Linnæan order of the Picæ, which has no one determined character."]

[3] [See below, § 189; and compare *Love's Meinie*, § 55.]

to you belongs essentially and characteristically to that order of pies, picæ, or painted birds, which the Greeks continually opposed in their thoughts and traditions to the singing birds, representing the one by the magpie, and the other by the nightingale. The myth of Autolycus and Philammon,[1] and Pindar's exquisite story of the infidelity of Coronis,[2] are the centres of almost countless traditions, all full of meaning, dependent on the various ποικιλία,[3] to eye and ear, of these opposed races of birds. The Greek idea of the Halcyon united both these sources of delight. I will read you what notices of it I find most interesting, not in order of date, but of brevity; the simplest first.

190. "And the King of Trachis, the child of the Morning Star, married Alcyone. And they perished, both of them, through their pride; for the king called his wife, Hera; and she her husband, Zeus: but Zeus made birds of them (*αὐτοὺς ἀπωρνέωσε*), and he made the one a Halcyon, and the other a Sea-mew."—*Apollodorus*, i. 7, 4.

"When the King of Trachis, the son of Hesperus, or of Lucifer, and Philonis, perished in shipwreck, his wife Alcyone, the daughter of Æolus and Ægiale, for love of him, threw herself into the sea;—who both, by the mercy of the gods, were turned into the birds called Halcyons. These birds, in the winter-time, build their nests, and lay their eggs, and hatch their young on the sea; and the sea is quiet in those days, which the sailors call the Halcyonia." —*Hyginus*, *Fab.* LXV.

191. "Now the King of Trachis, the son of Lucifer, had to wife Halcyone. And he, wishing to consult the oracle of Apollo concerning the state of his kingdom, was

[1] [See the *Fables* of Hyginus, 200, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, xi. 315 *seq.* To Chione were born, by Hermes, Autolycus, "ingenious at every theft, who used to make white out of black and black out of white," and Philammon, "famous for his tuneful song."]

[2] [See the third Pythian Ode, 8–62. Pindar makes Apollo himself witness of the infidelity of Coronis; in opposition to the current legend that the news was brought to him by a crow, and that, Apollo cursing the bird as a bearer of evil tidings, the crow, which before was white, has been black ever since: see Scholiast on Pindar (*l. c.*), and Apollodorus, iii. 10, 3.]

[3] [See Vol. XX. p. 349 *n.*]

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The Kingfisher

forbidden to go, by Halcyone, nevertheless he went; and perished by shipwreck. And when his body was brought to his wife Halcyone, she threw herself into the sea. Afterwards, by the mercy of Thetis and Lucifer, they were both turned into the sea-birds called Halcyons. And you ought to know that Halcyone is the woman's name, and is always a feminine noun; but the bird's name is Halcyon, masculine and feminine, and so also its plural, Halcyones. Also those birds make their nests in the sea, in the middle of winter; in which days the calm is so deep that hardly anything in the sea can be moved. Thence, also, the days themselves are called Halcyonia."—*Servius, in Virg. Georg.*, i. 399.

192. "And the pairing of birds, as I said, is for the most part in spring time, and early summer; except the halcyon's. For the halcyon has its young about the turn of days in winter, wherefore, when those days are fine, they are called 'Halcyonine' (ἀλκυόνειοι); seven, indeed, before the turn, and seven after it, as Simonides poetized (ἐποίησεν).

> 'As, when in the wintry month
> Zeus gives the wisdom of calm to fourteen days,
> Then the people of the land call it
> The hour of wind-hiding, the sacred
> Nurse of the spotted Halcyon.'

"And in the first seven days the halcyon is said to lay her eggs, and in the latter seven to bring forth and nourish her young. Here, indeed, in the seas of Greece, it does not always chance that the Halcyonid days are at the solstice; but in the Sicilian sea, almost always. But the æthuia and the laros bring forth their young (two, or three) among the rocks by the sea-shore; but the laros in summer, the æthuia in first spring, just after the turn of days; and they sit on them as other birds do. And none of these birds lie torpid in holes during the winter; but the halcyon is, of all, seen the seldomest, for it is seen scarcely at all, except just at the setting and turn of Pleias, and then it will but show itself once, and away; flying, perhaps,

once round a ship at anchor, and then it is gone instantly." —*Aristotle, Hist. Av.*, v. 8, 9.

193. "Now we are ready enough to extol the bee for a wise creature, and to consent to the laws by which it cares for the yellow honey, because we adore the pleasantness and tickling to our palates that is in the sweetness of that; but we take no notice of the wisdom and art of other creatures in bringing up their young, as for instance, the halcyon, who as soon as she has conceived, makes her nest by gathering the thorns of the sea-needle-fish; and, weaving these in and out, and joining them together at the ends, she finishes her nest; round in the plan of it, and long, in the proportion of a fisherman's net; and then she puts it where it will be beaten by the waves, until the rough surface is all fastened together and made close. And it becomes so hard that a blow with iron or stone will not easily divide it; but, what is more wonderful still, is that the opening of the nest is made so exactly to the size and measure of the halcyon that nothing larger can get into it, and nothing smaller!—so they say;—no, not even the sea itself, even the least drop of it."—*Plutarch: De Amore Prolis.*

I have kept to the last Lucian's dialogue, "the Halcyon," to show you how the tone of Christian thought, and tradition of Christ's walking on the sea, began to steal into heathen literature.[1]

### Socrates—Chaerephon

194. "*Chaerephon.* What cry is that, Socrates, which came to us from the beach? how sweet it was; what can it be? the things that live in the sea are all mute.

"*Socrates.* Yet it is a sea-creature, Chaerephon; the bird called Halcyon, concerning which the old fable runs

[1] [This dialogue is now generally excluded, as spurious, from Lucian's works. Ruskin here translates the whole of it, and it will be seen that it contains no precise parallel to Christ's walking on the water. Ruskin seems to have had in his mind the subsequent quelling of the storm, such as is referred to by Socrates (§ 195), and the general argument that with the gods all things are possible.]

that she was the daughter of Æolus, and, mourning in her youth for her lost husband, was winged by divine power, and now flies over the sea, seeking him whom she could not find, sought throughout the earth.

"*Chaerephon.* And is that indeed the Halcyon's cry? I never heard it yet; and in truth it is very pitiful. How large is the bird, Socrates?

"*Socrates.* Not great; but it has received great honour from the Gods, because of its lovingness; for while it is making its nest, all the world has the happy days which it calls halcyonidæ, excelling all others in their calmness, though in the midst of storm; of which you see this very day is one, if ever there was. Look, how clear the sky is, and the sea waveless and calm, like a mirror!

"*Chaerephon.* You say truly, and yesterday was just such another. But in the name of the Gods, Socrates, how is one to believe those old sayings, that birds were ever changed into women, or women into birds, for nothing could seem more impossible?

195. "*Socrates.* Ah, dear Chaerephon, it is likely that we are poor and blunt judges of what is possible and not: for we judge by comparing to human power a power unknown to us, unimaginable, and unseen. Many things, therefore, that are easy, seem to us difficult; and many things unattainable that may be attained; being thus thought of, some through the inexperience, and some through the infantine folly, of our minds. For in very deed every man may be thought of as a child—even the oldest of us,—since the full time of life is little, and as a baby's compared to universal time. And what should we have to say, my good friend, who know nothing of the power of gods or of the spirits of Nature, whether any of such things are possible or not? You saw, Chaerephon, what a storm there was, the day before yesterday; it makes one tremble even to think of it again;—that lightning, and thunder, and sudden tempest, so great that one would have thought all the earth falling to ruin; and yet, in a little while, came

the wonderful establishing of calm, which has remained even till now. Whether, then, do you think it the greater work, to bring such a calm out of that tormenting whirlwind, and reduce the universe to peace, or to change the form of a woman into that of a bird? For indeed we see how very little children, who know how to knead clay, do something like this also; often out of one lump they will make form after form, of different natures: and surely to the spirit-powers of Nature, being in vast and inconjecturable excess beyond ours, all such things must be in their hands easy. Or how much do you think heaven greater than thyself—can you say, perchance?

"*Chaerephon.* Who of men, O Socrates, could imagine or name any of these things?

196. "*Socrates.* Nay; do we not see also, in comparing man with man, strange differences in their powers and imbecilities? for complete manhood, compared with utter infancy, as of a child five or ten days old, has difference in power, which we may well call miraculous: and when we see man excel man so far, what shall we say that the strength of the whole heaven must appear, against ours, to those who can see them together, so as to compare them? Also, to you and me, and to many like us, sundry things are impossible that are easy to other people; as singing to those ignorant of music, and reading or writing to those ignorant of letters;—more impossible than to make women birds, or birds of women. For Nature, as with chance throw, and rough parable, making the form of a footless and wingless beast in changeable matter; then putting on feet and wings, and making it glitter all over with fair variegation and manifold colour, at last brings out, for instance, the wise bee, maker of the divine honey; and out of the voiceless and spiritless egg she brings many kinds of flying and foot-going and swimming creatures, using besides (as runs the old Logos) the sacred art of the great Aether.*

* Note this sentence respecting the power of the creative Athena.[1]

[1] [Compare *Queen of the Air*, §§ 31 *seq.* (Vol. XIX. pp. 328 *seq.*).]

We then, being altogether mortal and mean, and neither able to see clearly great things nor small, and, for the most part, being unable to help ourselves even in our own calamities,—what can we have to say about the powers of the immortals, either over halcyons or nightingales? But the fame of fable such as our fathers gave it to us, this, to my children, O thou bird singing of sorrow, I will deliver concerning thy hymns: and I myself will sing often of this religious and human love of thine, and of the honour thou hast for it from the Gods. Wilt not thou do likewise, O Chaerephon?

"*Chaerephon.* It is rightly due indeed, O Socrates, for there is two-fold comfort in this, both for men and women, in their relations with each other.

"*Socrates.* Shall we not then salute the halcyon, and so go back to the city by the sands, for it is time?

"*Chaerephon.* Indeed let us do so."

197. The note of the scholiast on this dialogue is the only passage in which I can find any approximately clear description of the Greek halcyon. It is about as large, he says, as a small sparrow; (the question how large a Greek sparrow was we must for the present allow to remain open;) and it is mixed of green and blue, with gleaming of purple above, and it has a slender and long beak: the beak is said to be "chloros," which I venture to translate "green," when it is used of the feathers, but it may mean anything, used of the beak. Then follows the same account as other people's, of the nest-building, except that the nest is compared in shape to a medicinal gourd. And then the writer goes on to say that there are two species of halcyons—one larger than the other, and silent, but the smaller, fond of singing (φῳδική); and that the females of these are so true to their mates that, when the latter grow old, the female bird flies underneath them, and carries them wherever they would like to go; and after they die will not eat nor drink anything, and so dies too. "And there is a certain kind of them, of which, if any one hear

the voice, it is an altogether true sign to him that he will die in a short time."

198. You will, I think, forgive me, if after reading to you these lovely fables, I do not distract you, or detain, with the difficult investigation of the degree in which they are founded on the not yet sufficiently known facts of the Kingfisher's life.[1]

I would much rather that you should remain impressed with the effect which the lovely colour and fitful appearance of the bird have had on the imagination of men. I may satisfy you by the assurance that the halcyon of England is also the commonest halcyon of Greece and of Palestine; and I may at once prove to you the real gain of being acquainted with the traditions of it, by reading to you two stanzas, certainly among the most familiar to your ears in

[1] [In Ruskin's MSS. about birds there is the following passage (not in his hand), headed "Halcyon, Present Account." It was probably sent to Ruskin by a friend, the last paragraph being his addition :—

"The English Halcyon is the only species of the Lebanon, and throughout Palestine is found in more secluded localities and on the banks of smaller streams than other species. It is impossible to find any reason for the Greek fables about its voice. I find in Yarrell's account of it the character of its cry is still uncertain: 'it is said to have a shrill piping note.' Mr. Sharpe calls it a shrill but not unmusical scream of the short syllables, heard, however, a considerable distance. 'When suddenly disturbed it utters its cry shortly after leaving its perch, and then flies for some distance in silence, but when passing unmolested from one resting-place to another its shrill note may be heard at frequent intervals; just before perching the cry is uttered three or four times successively.' The Ovidean idea of its feeble flight is also false. Bewick says that it flies near the surface of the water with the rapidity of an arrow, like a little brilliant meteor: 'considering the shortness of its wings, the velocity with which it flies is surprising.' Sharpe says, 'The flight is rapid and very direct, the bird speeding like a bullet.' I find no account anywhere of its mode of flying over sea, the notices of it being confined to its modes of feeding on the seashore, where it feeds on shrimps and crabs. Mr. H. B. Knox says that it is only found in autumn upon the coast in Ireland, and there only where it is rocky and full of pools out of which they can catch rock-fish and prawns; but, he adds, 'I have seen them on our islands miles out to sea, and have elsewhere mentioned how strangely out of place they seem in such localities, and how they roost on the gunwales of boats in little companies, sitting side by side like love-birds.' They utter a shrill grating whistle, more frequently over salt water than fresh. I have no doubt it would be a permanent resident in the county (Dublin), and generally throughout Ireland, if unmolested, because it breeds in suitable localities, and tarries with us frequently during the winter. Its nest is essentially a hole two or three inches in diameter, and tunnelled from a foot and a half to three feet and a half into any bank soft enough to be excavated and firm enough to be

the whole range of English poetry; yet which, I am well assured, will sound, after what we have been reflecting upon to-day, almost as if they were new to you. Note especially how Milton's knowledge that Halcyone was the daughter of the Winds, and Ceyx the son of the Morning Star, affects the course of his thought in the successive stanzas—

"But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of light
His reign of peace upon earth began:
The winds with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmèd wave.

"The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light
Of Lucifer, that often warn'd them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord Himself bespake, and bid them go."

199. I should also only weary you if I attempted to give you any interpretation of the much-entangled web of Greek fables connected with the story of Halcyone. You

safe. This is dug in a week or less, according to Dr. Kutter, the pitting and digging being done—notice this—apparently with the upper mandible of the beak only. I can't understand this action myself, because it seems to me that in holding the beak open the lower mandible must jar much more against the ground than if held fast together with the upper one. 'The upper mandible is, however,' the Doctor adds, 'fixed part to the skull, while the lower is only attached to it by joints and sinews.' Dr. Kutter has not seen the bird at work, but notes that the upper mandible is often shortened one or two lines as if by wear. I find no notice either of the way the bird throws out the ground behind it, which must involve a good deal of hard scratching with its short legs and delicate claws. How delicate these are may be seen by this little woodcut, which, though from a dried specimen, is accurate in the size and exquisite fineness of the claw, which one would expect to find much more worn than the beak after scratching out a wheelbarrowful of gravel. And there is not only the gallery to be cleared, but a chamber at the end of it in which the nest is made, generally six inches wide and four inches high; nest is too fine a word, for only after beginning to lay eggs the female gradually accumulates a heap of small

observe that in all these passages I have said "King of Trachis" instead of Ceyx. That is partly because I don't know how to pronounce Ceyx either in Greek or English; but it is chiefly to make you observe that this story of the sea-mew and Halcyon, now known through all the world, like the sea-mew's cry, has its origin in the "Rough country," or crag-country, under Mount Œta, made sacred to the Greek mind by the death of Heracles; and observe what strange connection that death has with the Halcyon's story. Heracles goes to this "Rough country" to seek for rest; all the waves and billows of his life having—as he thinks now—gone over him. But he finds death.[1]

As far as I can form any idea of this "rough, or torn, country" from the descriptions of Colonel Leake[2] or any other traveller, it must resemble closely the limestone cliffs just above Altorf, which break down to the valley from the ridge of the Windgelle, and give source, at their foot, to faultlessly clear streams,—green-blue among the grass.

You will find Pausanias noting the springs of Thermopylæ as of the bluest water he ever saw;[3] and if you fancy the Lake Lucerne to be the sea bay running inland from Artemisium, you will have a clear and useful, nor in any serious way inaccurate, image of the scene where the Greeks thought their best hero should die. You may remember also, with advantage, that Morgarten—the Thermopylæ of Switzerland—lies by the little lake of Egeri,[4] not

fish bones on which to lay them while she hatches. The pretty Greek fables, as far as I can make out at present, have no other foundation than this nasty habit.

"The general life of this bird, then, is by quiet streams and pools in which it can see the fish and catch them by diving. It would seem to have been in one of the fitful humours of Nature that she appointed this bird to watch its prey always from a rock or branch at a certain height above the water, and catch it by a darting dive, rarely missing its mark. It brings out its prey grasped in its strong beak, and beats it to death before swallowing." Some remarks on a possible explanation of the Greek fables will be found in W. Warde Fowler's *A Year with the Birds*, Note C.]

[1] [Sophocles, *Trachiniæ*, 1157 *seq.*]

[2] [*Travels in Northern Greece*, by William Martin Leake, 1835, vol. ii. ch. x.]

[3] [Pausanias, iv. 35, 9.]

[4] [See *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 111).]

ten miles from this bay of Altorf; and that the Heracles of Switzerland is born under those Trachinian crags.[1]

If, farther, you remember that the Halcyon would actually be seen flitting above the blue water of the springs, like one of their waves caught up and lighted by the sun; and the sea-mews haunting the cliffs, you will see how physical circumstances modify the under-tone of the words of every mythic tradition.

I cannot express to you how strange — how more and more strange every day—it seems to me, that I cannot find a single drawing, nor definite account, of scenes so memorable as this, to point you to;[2] but must guess and piece their image together for you as best I can from their Swiss similitudes. No English gentleman can pass through public school-life without knowing his *Trachiniæ;* yet I believe literally, we could give better account of the forms of the mountains in the moon, than we could of Œta. And what has art done to help us? How many Skiddaws or Benvenues, for one Œta,—if one! And when the English gentleman becomes an art-patron, he employs his painter-servant only to paint himself and his house; and when Turner was striving, in his youth, to enforce the mythology, and picture these very scenes in Greece, and putting his whole strength into the endeavour to conceive them, the noble pictures remained in his gallery; and for bread, he had to paint —— Hall, the seat of ——, Esquire, with the carriage drive, the summer-house, and the squire going out hunting.

If, indeed, the squire would make his seat worth painting, and would stay there, and would make the seats, or, shall we call them, forms, of his peasantry, worth painting too, he would be interpreting the fable of the Halcyon to purpose.

But you must, at once, and without any interpreter, feel for yourselves how much is implied in those wonderful

[1] [For references to the legends of William Tell, see below, p. 270 *n.*]
[2] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 111 (Vol. XX. pp. 103–104).]

words of Simonides,[1] written six hundred years before Christ; —"when in the wild winter months, Zeus gives the *wisdom of calm;*" and how much teaching there is for us in the imagination of past days,—this dream-picture of what is true in days that are, and are to come,—that perfect domestic love not only makes its nest upon the waves, but that the waves will be calm that it may.

200. True, I repeat, for all ages, and all people, that, indeed, are desirous of peace, and loving in trouble! But what fable shall we invent, what creature on earth or sea shall we find, to symbolize this state of ours in modern England? To what sorrowful birds shall *we* be likened, who make the principal object of our lives dispeace, and unrest; and turn our wives and daughters out of their nests, to work for themselves?

Nay, strictly speaking, we have not even got so much as nests to turn them out of. I was infinitely struck, only the other day, by the saying of a large landed proprietor (a good man, who was doing all he could for his tenantry, and building new cottages for them), that the best he *could* do for them, under present conditions of wages, and the like, was, to give them good drainage and bare walls.

"I am obliged," he said to me, "to give up all thought of anything artistic, and even then, I must lose a considerable sum on every cottage I build."

201. Now, there is no end to the confused states of wrong and misery which that landlord's experience signifies. In the first place, no landlord has any business with building cottages for his people. Every peasant should be able to build his own cottage,—to build it to his mind; and to have a mind to build it to. In the second place, note the unhappy notion which has grown up in the modern English mind, that wholesome and necessary delight in what is pleasant to the eye, is artistic affectation. You have the exponent of it all in the central and mighty affectation of

[1] [Quoted by Aristotle: see above, § 192, p. 251.]

the Houses of Parliament.[1] A number of English gentlemen get together to talk; they have no delight whatever in any kind of beauty; but they have a vague notion that the appointed place for their conversation should be dignified and ornamental; and they build over their combined heads the absurdest and emptiest piece of filigree,—and, as it were, eternal foolscap in freestone,—which ever human beings disgraced their posterity by. Well, all that is done, partly, and greatly, in mere jobbery; but essentially also in a servile imitation of the Hôtel-de-Ville builders of old time; but the English gentleman has not the remotest idea that when Hôtels-de-Ville were built, the ville enjoyed its hotel;—the town had a real pride in its town hall, and place of council, and the sculptures of it had precious meaning for all the populace.

202. And in like manner, if cottages are ever to be wisely built again, thé peasant must enjoy his cottage, and be himself its artist, as a bird is. Shall cock-robins and yellow-hammers have wit enough to make themselves comfortable, and bullfinches peck a Gothic tracery out of dead clematis,—and your English yeoman be fitted by his landlord with four dead walls and a drain-pipe? That is the result of your spending £800,000 a year at Kensington in science and art, then? You have made beautiful machines, too, wherewith you save the peasant the trouble of ploughing and reaping, and threshing; and after being saved all that time and toil, and getting, one would think, leisure enough for his education, you have to lodge him also, as you drop a puppet into a deal box, and you lose money in doing it! and two hundred years ago, without steam, without electricity, almost without books, and altogether without help from *Cassell's Educator* or the morning newspapers, the Swiss shepherd could build himself a châlet, daintily carved, and with flourished inscriptions, and with red and blue and white ποικιλία; and the burgess of Strasburg

[1] [For references to other passages criticising the Houses of Parliament, see the notes at Vol. VII. p. 450, and Vol. XVIII. p. 408.]

could build himself a house like this I showed you,[1] and a spire such as all men know; and keep a precious book or two in his public library, and praise God for all: while we,—what are *we* good for, but to damage the spire, knock down half the houses, and burn the library,—and declare there is no God but Chemistry?

203. What *are* we good for? Are even our machines of destruction useful to us? Do they give us real power? Once, indeed, not like halcyons, but like sea-eagles, we had our homes upon the sea; fearless alike of storm or enemy, winged like the wave petrel; and as Arabs of an indeed pathless desert, we dwelt in the presence of all our brethren. Our pride is fallen; no reed shaken with the wind,[2] near the little singing halcyon's nest, is more tremulous than we are now; though we have built iron nests on the sea, with walls impregnable. We have lost our pride—but have we gained peace? Do we even care to seek it, how much less strive to make it?

204. Have you ever thought seriously of the meaning of that blessing given to the peace-makers?[3] People are always expecting to get peace in heaven; but you know whatever peace they get there will be ready made. Whatever making of peace *they* can be blest for, must be on the earth here: not the taking of arms against, but the building of nests amidst, its "sea of troubles."[4] Difficult enough, you think? Perhaps so, but I do not see that any of us try. We complain of the want of many things—we want votes, we want liberty, we want amusement, we want money. Which of us feels, or knows, that he wants peace?

205. There are two ways of getting it, if you do want it. The first is wholly in your own power; to make yourselves nests of pleasant thoughts. Those are nests on the sea indeed, but safe beyond all others; only they need

[1] [See above, § 86, p. 184.]
[2] [Matthew xi. 7.]
[3] [Matthew v. 9: compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 63, where this passage is referred to.]
[4] [*Hamlet* Act iii. sc. 1.]

much art in the building. None of us yet know, for none of us have yet been taught in early youth, what fairy palaces we may build of beautiful thought—proof against all adversity. Bright fancies, satisfied memories, noble histories, faithful sayings, treasure-houses of precious and restful thoughts, which care cannot disturb, nor pain make gloomy, nor poverty take away from us—houses built without hands,[1] for our souls to live in.

206. And in actual life, let me assure you, in conclusion, the first "wisdom of calm," is to plan, and resolve to labour for, the comfort and beauty of a home such as, if we could obtain it, we would quit no more.[2] Not a compartment of a model lodging-house, not the number so-and-so of Paradise Row; but a cottage all of our own, with its little garden, its pleasant view, its surrounding fields, its neighbouring stream, its healthy air, and clean kitchen, parlours, and bedrooms. Less than this, no man should be content with for his nest; more than this few should seek: but if it seem to you impossible, or wildly imaginary, that such houses should ever be obtained for the greater part of the English people, again believe me, the obstacles which are in the way of our obtaining them are the things which it must be the main object now of all true science, true art, and true literature to overcome. Science does its duty, not in telling us the causes of spots in the sun; but in explaining to us the laws of our own life, and the consequences of their violation. Art does its duty, not in filling monster galleries with frivolous, or dreadful, or indecent pictures; but in completing the comforts and refining the pleasures of daily occurrence, and familiar service: and literature does its duty, not in wasting our hours in political discussion, or in idle fiction; but in raising our fancy to the height of what may be noble, honest, and felicitous in actual life;—in giving us, though we may ourselves be poor and unknown, the companionship

[1] [2 Corinthians v. 1.]
[2] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 122 (Vol. XX. p. 112).]

of the wisest fellow-spirits of every age and country,[1]—and in aiding the communication of clear thoughts and faithful purposes, among distant nations, which will at last breathe calm upon the sea of lawless passion, and change into such halcyon days the winter of the world, that the birds of the air may have their nests in peace, and the Son of Man, where to lay His head.[2]

[1] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 6, 7 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 58–59).]
[2] [Matthew viii. 20: compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 26 *n.* (Vol. XVIII. p. 407).]

# LECTURE X

## THE HERALDIC ORDINARIES[1]

*March 9th*, 1872

207. In my last lecture, I endeavoured to illustrate for you the use of art to the science of physiology. I am to-day to introduce to you its elementary forms as an exponent of the science of history. Which, speaking with perfect accuracy, we ought to call, also, "physiology," or *natural* history of man; for it ought to be in truth the history of his Nature; and not merely of the accidents which have befallen him. Do we not too much confuse the important part of the science with the unimportant?

In giving the natural history of the lion, you do not care materially where such and such a lion was trapped, or how many sheep it had eaten. You want to know what sort of a minded and shaped creature it is, or ought to be. But in all our books of human history we only care to tell what has happened to men, and how many of each other they have, in a manner, eaten, when they are, what Homer calls δημοβόροι, people-eaters;[2] and we scarcely understand, even to this day, how they are truly minded. Nay, I am not sure that even this art of heraldry, which has for its main object the telling and proclamation of our chief minds and characters to each other, and keeping record of descent by race, as far as it is possible, (or, under the present aspect of Darwinism, pleasant), to trace it;—I am not sure that even heraldry has always understood clearly what it

[1] [With this chapter compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 22, where Ruskin refers to it.]

[2] [For this epithet, compare *Lectures on Art*, § 116 (Vol. XX. p. 108). With what is here said about history, compare below, § 214 (p. 269), and Vol. XVI. p. 452.]

had to tell. But I am very sure it has not been understood in the telling.

208. Some of you have, I hope, looked at this book * of Arthur Helps, on "War and Culture," about which I cannot now say what I would, because he has done me the grace of dedicating it to me; but you will find in it, directly bearing on our present subject, this story about heraldry:

"A friend of mine, a physician, became entangled in the crowd at Kennington on that memorable evening when a great Chartist row was expected, and when Louis Napoleon armed himself with a constable's staff to support the cause of order. My friend observed a young man of pleasant appearance, who was very busy in the crowd, and appeared to be a leader amongst them. Gradually, by the pressure of the crowd, the two were brought near together, and the good doctor had some talk with this fiery partisan. They exchanged confidences; and to his astonishment, the doctor found that this furious young Chartist gained his livelihood, and a very good livelihood too, by heraldic painting—by painting the coats-of-arms upon carriages. Now, if you can imagine this young man's darling enterprise to have been successful, if Chartism had prevailed, what would have become of the painting of arms upon carriage-panels? I believe that my good doctor insinuated this suggestion to the young man, and that it was received with disdain. I must own, therefore, that the *utile*, even when brought home to a man's self, has much less to do with people's political opinions and desires, than might at first be supposed. Indeed, I would

* *Conversations on War and General Culture.*[1]

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[1] [The extract is from pp. 190, 191 of *Conversations on War and General Culture, by the author of "Friends in Council,"* 1871. The dedication is as follows:—

"London, *March* 1871.

"My dear Ruskin,—I dedicate these 'Conversations on War and Culture' to you, feeling that there is none who will receive them with more kindliness, and endeavour with more earnestness to make the best of them.

"I sympathise with you very cordially in the great effort you are making to draw attention to the wants of the labouring classes. Whatever may be the measure of your success in that difficult work, you, at any rate, have set a great example in showing that a man, who has an especial aptitude for teaching the most advanced students in matters of high art, can, for the moment, put aside his especial vocation, in order to make mankind address themselves to the far greater question of how the poorer classes can be raised to independence of thought, comfort of living, and dignity of behaviour.

"I remain, yours affectionately,

"The Author.

"J. Ruskin, Esq., LL.D."]

venture to maintain, that *no great change has ever been produced in the world by motives of self-interest.* Sentiment, that thing which many wise people affect to despise, is the commanding thing as regards popular impulses and popular action."

209. This last sentence would have been wholly true, had Mr. Helps written "no great *living* change." The changes of Dissolution are continually produced by self-interest,—for instance, a great number of the changes in your methods of life in England just now, and many of those in your moral temper, are produced by the percentage on the sale of iron. And I should have otherwise interpreted the heroism of the young Chartist, and said that he was moved on the 10th of April, by a deep under-current of self-interest; that by overthrowing Lordship, he expected to get much more for himself than his salary as an heraldic painter; and that he had not, in painting his carriage-panels, sentiment enough, or even sentiment at all.

"Paint me my arms,—" said Giotto, as the youth threw him his white shield with that order—"he speaks as if he were one of the Bardi!"[1] Our English panel-painter had lost the consciousness that there yet remained above him, so much as one, of the Bardi.

May not that be somewhat the Bardi's fault? in that they have not taught their Giottos, lately, the function of heraldry, or of any other higher historical painting.

We have, especially, to-day, to consider what that function is.

210. I said[2] that the function of historical painting, in representing animals, is to discern and record what is best and most beautiful in their ways of life, and their forms; so also, in representing man, it is to record of man what has been best in his acts and way of life, and fairest in his form.

But this way of the life of man has been a long one. It is difficult to know it—more difficult to judge; to do

[1] [For this anecdote, see *Giotto and his Works in Padua*, § 14.]
[2] [See above, p. 227.]

either with complete equity is impossible; but it is always possible to do it with the charity which does not rejoice in iniquity.[1]

211. Among the many mistakes we have lately fallen into, touching that same charity, one of the worst is our careless habit of always thinking of her as pitiful, and to be concerned only with miserable and wretched persons; whereas her chief joy is in being reverent, and concerned mainly with noble and venerable persons. Her poorest function is the giving of pity; her highest is the giving of *praise*. For there are many men, who, however fallen, do not like to be pitied; but all men, however far risen, like to be praised.

212. I had occasion in my last lecture to express my regret that the method of education in this country has become so distinctly competitive.[2] It is necessary, however, to distinguish carefully between the competition which is for the means of existence, and that which is for the praise of learning. For my own part, so far as they affect our studies here, I equally regret both: but competition for money I regret absolutely; competition for praise, only when it sets the reward for too short and narrow a race. I want you to compete, not for the praise of what you know, but for the praise of what you become; and to compete only in that great school, where death is the examiner, and God the judge. For you will find, if you look into your own hearts, that the two great delights, in loving and praising, and the two great thirsts, to be loved and praised, are the roots of all that is strong in the deeds of men, and happy in their repose.[3] We yet, thank Heaven, are not ashamed to acknowledge the power of love; but we confusedly and doubtfully allege that of honour; and though we cannot but instinctively triumph still, over a won boat-race, I suppose the best of us would

[1] [1 Corinthians xiii. 6.]
[2] [See above, p. 243.]
[3] [For "the two great delights" in this connexion, see *A Joy for Ever*, § 167 (Vol. XVI. p. 154); and for "the two great thirsts," *ibid.*, §§ 26, 27 (pp. 33–34).]

shrink somewhat from declaring that the love of praise was to be one of the chief motives of their future lives.

213. But I believe you will find it, if you think, not only one of the chief, but absolutely the chief, motive of human action; nay, that love itself is, in its highest state, the rendering of an exquisite praise to body and soul; and our English tongue is very sacred in this; for its Saxon word, love, is connected, through the old French verb, loer, (whence louange), with the Latin, "laus," not "amor."

And you may sum the duty of your life in the giving of praise worthily, and being yourselves worthy of it.

214. Therefore in the reading of all history, your first purpose must be to seek what is to be praised; and disdain the rest: and in doing so, remember always that the most important part of the history of man is that of his imagination. What he actually does, is always in great part accidental; it is at best a partial fulfilment of his purpose; and what we call history is often, as I said,[1] merely a record of the external accidents which befall men getting together in large crowds. The real history of mankind is that of the slow advance of resolved deed following laboriously just thought: and all the greatest men live in their purpose and effort more than it is possible for them to live in reality. If you would praise them more worthily, it is for what they conceived and felt; not merely for what they have done.

215. It is therefore a true historian's work diligently to separate the deed from the imagination; and when these become inconsistent, to remember that the imagination, if precious at all, is indeed the most precious. It is no matter how much, or how little of the two first books of Livy may be literally true. The history of the Romans is the history of the nation which could *conceive* the battle of the Lake Regillus.[2] I have rowed in rough weather on the

[1] [See above, § 207, p. 265.]

[2] [So, for guide-book to Rome, Ruskin recommends the two first books of Livy (*Mornings in Florence*, § 76)—Livy, who is "the Roman Homer" (see Vol. XVII. p. xlvi.).]

Lake of the Four Cantons often enough to know that the legend of Tell is, in literal detail, absurd:[1] but the history of Switzerland is that of the people who expressed their imagination of resistance to injustice by that legend, so as to animate their character vitally to this day.

216. But in no part of history does the ideal separate itself so far from the reality; and in no part of it is the ideal so necessary and noble, as in your own inherited history—that of Christian Chivalry.

For all English gentlemen this is the part of the tale of the race of man which it is most essential for them to know. They may be proud that it is also the greatest part. All that hitherto has been achieved of best,—all that has been in noble preparation instituted,—is begun in the period, and rooted in the conception, of Chivalry.

You must always carefully distinguish that conception from the base strength of the resultless passions which distort and confuse it. Infinitely weaker, the ideal is eternal and creative; the clamorous rages pass away,—ruinous it may be, prosperous it may be, for their time;—but insignificant

[1] [The legend was, it will be remembered, that Gessler, the Austrian bailiff of Uri, had seized and bound Tell, and was conveying him by boat to a castle on the Lake of Lucerne, when a storm arose. Tell was thereupon unbound, and given charge of the rudder on his promise to bring the boat safe to land. He steered it to a shelf of rock, called Tell's Platte, sprang ashore, shot Gessler dead with the cross-bow, and escaped. Ruskin referred to this part of the legend in a letter to his father from Brunnen (June 7, 1858):—

> "I was at Tell's Chapel to-day—a miserable place, covered with the vilest daubs of fresco, with two black, rotten, neglected altars on each side and a larger one in the middle; the pictures of Crucifixion—Joseph, I believe, and Mary, above, being nearly all blotched and mildewed away. The building of the foundation entirely conceals the rock on which Tell landed, though I cannot prevent myself from looking on this whole story of the storm as apocryphal. I believe Gessler would not have employed boatmen who did not know their business; moreover, it would have been far easier for Gessler to land in any weather, anywhere, than for Tell himself to have got off the platform of rock by land. To get ashore is perfectly easy in any part of the lake; but when you are ashore, to get along is by no means easy. Platforms of rock and little slopes of beach there are in plenty; but paths from one platform, or one piece of beach, to another, there are none; and the poor little kids, who are brought by boat to the slopes of beach and turf, cannot, even with their pretty little feet, pass from one bay to another, but come bleating down to the shore when a boat passes to see if it is to take them home."

For another allusion to the legend of Tell, see Vol. XVIII. p. 537.]

for ever. You find kings and priests alike, always inventing expedients to get money; you find kings and priests alike, always inventing pretexts to gain power. If you want to write a practical history of the Middle Ages, and to trace the real reasons of the things that actually happened, investigate first the history of the money; and then of the quarrels for office and territory. But the things that actually happened were of small consequence—the thoughts that were developed are of infinite consequence.

217. As I was walking back from Hincksey last evening, somewhat discomfited by the look of bad weather, and more in myself, as I thought over this closing lecture, wondering how far you thought I had been talking idly to you, instead of teaching you to draw, through this term, I stopped before Messrs. Wyatt's window;[1] caught—as it was intended every one should be—by this display of wonderful things. And I was very unhappy as I looked, for it seemed to me you could not but think the little I could show you how to do quite valueless; while here were produced, by mysteries of craft which you might expect me at once to explain, brilliant water-colours in purple and gold, and photographs of sea-waves, and chromo-lithotints of beautiful young ladies, and exquisitely finished engravings of all sorts of interesting scenes, and sublime personages: patriots, saints, martyrs, penitents, and who not! and what not! all depicted with a dexterity which it has cost the workmen their life's best energy to learn, and requires great cleverness thus to apply. While, in your room for study, there are only ugly photographs of Dürers and Holbeins, and my rude outlines from leaves, and you scarcely ever hear me say anything in praise of that delightful and elaborate modern art at all.

218. So I bought this Madonna,* which was the prettiest thing I saw: and it will enable me to tell you why this

* Now, Ref. 104 [Vol. XXI. p. 86.]

[1] [A printseller's, at Oxford.]

modern art is, indeed, so little to be studied, even at its best. I think you will all like the plate, and you ought to like it; but observe in what its beauty consists. First, in very exquisite line engraving: against that I have nothing to say, feeling the greatest respect for the industry and skill it requires. Next, in a grace and severity of action which we all are ready to praise; but this is not the painter's own bestowing; the trick of it is learned from Memling and Van Eyck, and other men of the northern religious school. The covering of the robe with jewels is pleasing to you; but that is learned from Angelico[1] and John Bellini; and if you will compare the jewel-painting in the John Bellini (Standard No. 5),[2] you will find this false and formal in comparison. Then the face is much dignified by having a crown set on it—which is copied from the ordinary thirteenth century form, and ill done. The face itself is studied from a young German mother's, and is only by the painter's want of skill made conventional in expression, and formal in feature. It would have been wiser and more difficult to have painted her as Raphael or Reynolds would, with true personal resemblance, perfected in expression.

219. Nevertheless, in its derivative way, this is very lovely. But I wish you to observe that it *is* derivative in all things. The dress is derivative; the action, derivative: above all, the conception is derivative altogether, from that great age of Christian chivalry, which, in art and thought alike, surpassed the Greek chivalry, because it added to their enthusiasm of patriotism the enthusiasm of imaginative love, sanctified by this ruling vision of the Madonna, as at once perfect maid and perfect mother.

And your study of the art of the Middle Ages must begin in your understanding how the men of them looked on Love as the source of all honour, as of life; and how,

[1] [For Angelico in this connexion, see *Laws of Fésole*, ch. vii. (Vol. XV. pp. 420, 421 and *nn.*).]

[2] [See Vol. XXI. p. 13.]

from the least thing to the greatest, the honouring of father and mother, the noble esteem of children, and the sincere respect for race, and for the courtesies and prides that graced and crowned its purity, were the sources of all their virtue, and all their joy.

220. From the least things, I say, to the greatest.[1] I am to speak to-day of one of, apparently, the least things; which is, indeed, one of the greatest. How much of the dignity of this Madonna, do you suppose, depends on the manner she bears her dress, her crown, her jewels, and her sceptre?

In peasant and prince alike, you will find that ultimately character is truly heralded in dress; and that splendour in dress is as necessary to man as colour to birds and flowers, but splendour with more meaning. Splendour observe, however, in the true Latin sense of the word; *brightness* of colour; not gaudiness: what I have been telling you of colour in pictures will apply equally to colour in dress: vulgarity consists in the insolence and discord of it, not in brightness.[2]

221. For peasant and prince alike, in healthy national order, brightness of dress and beautiful arrangement of it are needful. No indication of moral decline is more sure than the squalor of dress among the lower orders, and the fear or shame of the higher classes to bear their proper insignia.

Such fear and shame are singularly expressed, here in Oxford, at this hour. The nobleman ceases to wear the golden tassel in his cap, so accepting, and publicly heralding his acceptance of, the popular opinion of him that he has ceased to *be* a nobleman, or noteworthy[3] person.*

* "Another stride that has been taken appears in the perishing of heraldry. Whilst the privileges of nobility are passing to the middle class, the badge is discredited, and the titles of lordship are getting musty and

[1] [Compare *Mornings in Florence*, § 26.]
[2] [Compare Vol. VII. p. 428; Vol. XVI. p. 48.]
[3] [Compare § 39; above, p. 151.]

And the members of the University, generally, shrink from wearing their academical dress, so accepting, and publicly heralding their acceptance of, the popular opinion that everybody else may be as good scholars as they. On the other hand, I see continually in the streets young men in bright costumes of blue and white; in such evidently proud heraldry proclaiming their conviction that the chief object of residence in Oxford is learning to row; the rowing itself being, I imagine, not for real boat service, but for purposes of display.

222. All dress is thus heraldic; a soldier's dress only more definitely so, in proclaiming the thing he means to die as well as to live for;[1] but all is heraldic, from the beggar's rag to the king's diadem; it may be involuntarily, it may be insolently; but when the characters of men are determined, and wise, their dress becomes heraldic reverently, and in order. "Togam e tugurio proferrè uxorem Raciliam jubet;"[2] and Edie Ochiltree's blue gown is as honourably heraldic as a knight's ermine.[3]

223. The beginning of heraldry, and of all beautiful dress, is, however, simply in the wearing of the skins of slain animals. You may discredit, as much as you choose, the literal meaning of that earliest statement, "Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skin, and clothed them:"[4] but the figurative meaning of it only becomes the stronger. For if you think of the skins of animals as giving the four great materials of dress —leather, fur, wool, and down, you will see in this verse the summary of what has ever since taken place in the method of the providence of the Maker of Man and beast,

cumbersome. I wonder that sensible men have not been already impatient of them. They belong, with wigs, powder, and scarlet coats, to an earlier age, and may be advantageously consigned, with paint and tattoo, to the dignitaries of Australia and Polynesia."—R. W. EMERSON (*English Traits*).

[1] [Compare *Unto this Last*, §§ 17–21 (Vol. XVII. pp. 36–40).]
[2] [Cincinnatus: see Livy, iii. 26, 12.]
[3] [*The Antiquary*, ch. iv.]
[4] [Genesis iii. 21.]

for the clothing of the naked creature who was to rule over the rest.

224. The first practical and savage use of such dress was that the skin of the head of the beast became a covering for the head of its slayer;[1] the skin of its body his coat; the skin of the fore legs was knotted in front, and the skin of the hind legs and tail became tassels, the jags of the cut edges forming a kind of fringe here and there.

You have thus the first conception of a helmet with the mane of the animal for its crest or plume, and the first conception of a cuirass variously fringed, striped, or spotted; in complete accoutrement for war, you have to add spear, (or arrow), and shield. The spear is properly a beam of wood, iron pointed; the shield a disk of leather, iron fronted.

And armed strength for conflict is symbolized for all future time by the Greeks, under the two types of Heracles and Athena; the one with the low lion's crest and the arrow, the other with the high horse's crest, and the spear; one with the lion-skin, the other with the goat-skin;—both with the round shield.

225. The nebris of Dionusos[2] and leopard-skin of the priests of Egypt relate to astronomy, not war; and the interest in their spots and bars, as variously symbolic, together with real pleasure in their grotesqueness, greatly modified the entire system of Egyptian colour-decoration. On the earliest Greek vases, also, the spots and bars of the animals are carried out in spots or chequers upon the ground (sometimes representing flowers), and the delight in "divers colours of needlework,"[3] and in fantasy of embroidery, gradually refine and illumine the design of Eastern dress. But only the patterns derived from the colours of animals become classical in heraldry under the general name of "furres," one of them "vaire" or verrey ("the variegated

[1] [See further, below, § 229, p. 277.]
[2] [See *Lectures on Art*, § 155 (Vol. XX. p. 149).]
[3] [Judges v. 30.]

fur,") rudely figuring the material composed of the skins of small animals sewn together, alternately head to tail; the other, ermine, peculiarly honourable, from the costliness, to southern nations, of the fur it represents.

226. The name of the principal heraldic colour has a similar origin:[1] the "rams' skins dyed red"[2] which were used for the curtains of the Jewish tabernacle, were always one of the principal articles of commerce between the east and west: in mediæval Latin they were called "gulae," and in the French plural "gules," so that to be dressed in "gules," came gradually to mean being dressed in the particular red of those skins, which was a full soft scarlet, not dazzling, but warm and glowing. It is used, in opposition to darker purple, in large masses in the fresco painting of later Rome;—is the dominant colour of ornamental writing in the Middle Ages (giving us the ecclesiastical term "rubric"), and asserts itself finally, and most nobly, in the fresco paintings of Ghirlandajo and Luini. I have tried to represent very closely the tint of it Luini has given to St. Catherine's mantle, in my study in your schools.[3] Titian keeps it also as the keynote of his frescoes; so also Tintoret; but Raphael, Correggio, and Michael Angelo, all substituted orange for it in opposition to purple; and the entire scheme of colour in the Vatican frescoes is of orange and purple, broken by green and white, on a ground of grey. This orange and purple opposition in meaner hands became gaudy and feeble, and the system of mediæval colour was at last totally destroyed by it; the orange remaining to this day the favourite, and most distinctive, hue in bad glass painting.

227. The forms of dress, however, derived from the skins of animals are of much more importance than the colours. Of these the principal is the crest, which is properly the mane of lion or horse. The skin of the horse was neither

[1] [Compare with this section ch. vii. ("The Twelve Zodiacal Colours") of *Laws of Fésole* (Vol. XV. p. 430).]

[2] [Exodus xxv. 5.]

[3] [See Vol. XXI. p. 299.]

tough, nor of convenient size for wearing; but the classical Greek helmet is only an adaptation of the outline of its head, with the mane floating behind: many Etruscan helmets have ears also, while in mediæval armour, light plates, cut into the shape of wings of birds, are often placed on each side of the crest, which then becomes not the mane of the animal merely, but the image of the entire creature which the warrior desires to be renowned for having slain.

228. The Heraldic meaning of the crest is accordingly, first, that the Knight asserts himself to have prevailed over the animal it represents; and to be stronger than such a creature would be, therefore, against his human enemies. Hence, gradually, he considers himself invested with the power and character of the slain creature itself; and, as it were, to have taken from it, for his spoil, not its skin only but its strength. The crest, therefore, is the heraldic indication of personality, and is properly to be distinguished from the bearing on the shield, because that indicated race; but the crest, personal character and valour.

229. I have traced the practical truth which is the foundation of this idea of the transmitted strength of the slain creature becoming the inheritance of its victor, in the account given of the coins of Camarina, in *The Queen of the Air*.[1] But it is strange and sad to reflect how much misery has resulted, in the history of man, from the imaginative excuse for cruelty afforded by the adopted character of savage animals; and how many wolves, bears, lions, and eagles, have been national symbols, instead of gentler creatures. Even the heraldic symbol of Christ is in Italy oftener the lion than the lamb: and among the innumerable painters of his Desert Prophet, only Filippo Lippi[2] understood the full meaning of the raiment of camel's hair, and made him wear the camel's skin, as Heracles the Lion's.

[1] [§§ 172, 173 (Vol. XIX. p. 416).]

[2] [The reference is to the figure of the Baptist in Lippi's "Coronation of the Virgin" in the Accademia at Florence. The picture had first attracted Ruskin's particular attention in 1870 (see Vol. XX. pp. lii., liii.). For other references to the Baptist's head-covering, see below, p. 428, and *Val d'Arno*, § 67 (Vol. XXIII. p. 44).]

230. Although the crest is thus essentially an expression of personal character, it practically becomes hereditary; and the sign on shield and helmet is commonly the same. But the shield has a system of bearings peculiar to itself, to which I wish especially to direct your attention to-day.

Our word "shield" and the German "schild" mean "the covering thing," that behind which you are sheltered, but you must be careful to distinguish it from the word shell, which means properly a scale or plate, developed like a fish's scale, for the protection of the body.

There are properly only two kinds of shields, one round and the other square, passing into oval and oblong; the round one being for use in free action, the square one for adjustment to ground or walls; but, on horseback, the lower part of the shield must be tapered off, in order to fall conveniently on the left side of the horse.

And, therefore, practically you have two great forms of shield; the Greek round one, for fighting on foot, or in the chariot, and the Gothic pointed one, for fighting on horseback. The oblong one for motionless defence is, however, almost always given to the mythic figure of Fortitude,[1] and the bearings of the Greek and Gothic shields are always designed with reference to the supposed figures of the circle and square.

The Greek word for the round shield is "aspis." I have no doubt, merely a modification, of "apsis," the potter's wheel; the proper word for the Gothic shield is "ecu," from the Latin "scutum," meaning a shield covered with leather. From "ecu" you have "ecuyer;"—from "scutum" "scutiger," both passing into our English "squire."

231. The aspis of the Greeks might be much heavier than the Gothic shield, because a Greek never rode fully armed; his object was to allow both to his horse and to himself the most perfect command of limb compatible with protection; if, therefore, he was in full armour, and wanted his horse to carry him, he put a board upon wheels, and

[1] [As in Giotto's fresco in the Arena Chapel at Padua: see Vol. XXIV.]

stood on that, harnessing sometimes to it four horses of the highest breed abreast. Of all hitherto practised exertions of manual dexterity, the driving thus at full speed over rough ground, standing in the chariot, is, as far as I know, the greatest ever attained by general military discipline.

It is true that to do anything perfectly well is about equally difficult; and I suppose that in a chariot race, a tournament, or a modern game at cricket, the manual art of the most highly-trained men would be almost equally fine; still, practically, in Gothic chivalry, the knight trusted more to his weight and less to his skill than a Greek did; nor could a horse's pace under armour ever render precision of aim so difficult as at unarmed speed.

282. Another great difference of a parallel kind exists in the knight's body-armour. A Greek never hopes to turn a lance by his cuirass, nor to be invulnerable except by enchantment, in his body-armour, because he will not have it cumbrous enough to impede his movements; but he makes his shield, if possible, strong enough to stop a lance, and carries it as he would a piece of wall: a Gothic knight, on the contrary, endeavoured to make his coat-armour invulnerable, and carried the shield merely to ward thrusts on the left side, never large enough to encumber the arm that held the reins. All fine design in Gothic heraldry is founded, therefore, on the form of a short, but pointed shield, convex enough to throw the point of a spear aside easily; a form roughly extending from the beginning of the twelfth to the middle of the fifteenth century, but of which the most beautiful types are towards the end of the thirteenth.

283. The difference in method of device between the Gothic and classic shields resulted partly from this essential difference in form. The pointed shield, having definitely two sides, like a pointed arch, and a determined position, naturally suggested an arrangement of bearings definitely on one side or the other, or above, or below the centre, while the Greek shield had its boss, or its main bearing, in the

centre always, with subordinate decoration round. Farther, the Gothic fineness of colour-instinct seized at once on this division of parts as an opportunity for inlaying or counter-changing colours; and finally, the respect for race, carried out by registry of the remotest branches of noble families, compelled the Gothic heralds of later times to use these methods of dividing or quartering in continually redoubled complexity.

**284.** Essentially, therefore, as distinguished from the classic shield, the Gothic one is parti-coloured beneath its definite bearings, or rather, bi-coloured; for the tinctures are never more than two in the main design of them; and the specific methods of arrangement of these two masses of colour have deeper and more ancient heraldic significance than, with few exceptions, their superimposed bearings. I have arranged the twelve principal ones* in the 7th of your rudimentary exercises,[1] and they will be entirely fixed in your minds by once drawing it.

**285.** Observe respecting them.

(1.) The Chiefe; a bar of colour across the upper part of the shield, signifies authority or chief-dom, as the source of all order, power, and peace.

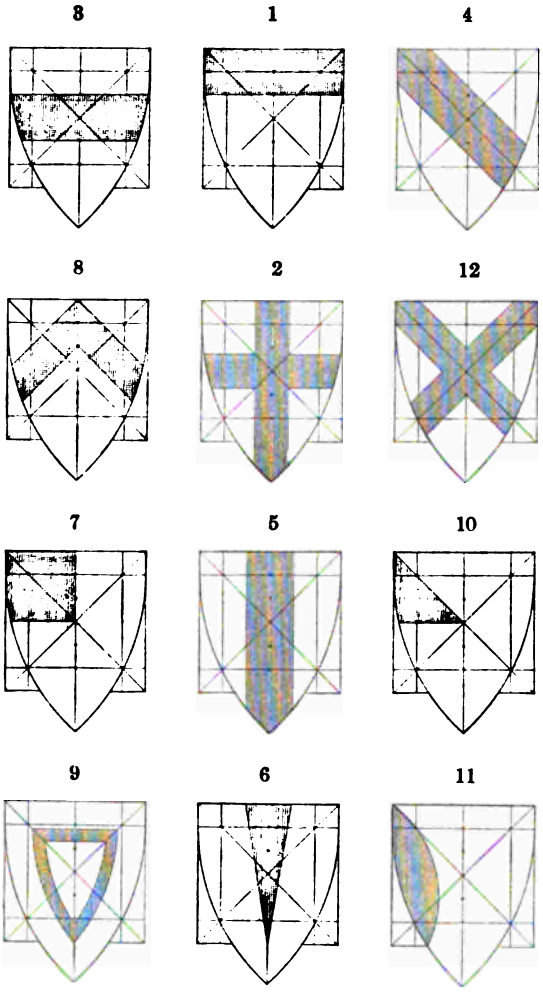
(2.) The cross, as an ordinary, distinguished from the cross as a bearing, consists simply of two bars dividing the shield into four quarters; and, I believe, that it does not in this form stand properly as a symbol of Christian faith, but only as one of Christian patience and fortitude. The cross as a symbol of faith is terminated within the field.

(3.) The Fesse, a horizontal bar across the middle of the shield, represents the knight's girdle, or anything that binds and secures, or continues. The word is a corruption

* Charges which "doe peculiarly belong to this art, and are of ordinary use therein, in regard whereof they are called 'ordinaries.'"—See GUILLIM, sect. ii. chap. iii. (Ed. 1638.)

"They have also the title of honourable ordinaries in that the court armour is much honoured thereby." The French call them "pièces honorables."

[1] [See Vol. XXI. p. 173. The example is here engraved (Plate XXIII.).]




J Ruskin

Engraved by G. Allen
Vaus & Crampton sc.

## The Twelve Heraldic Ordinaries

of fascia. Sir Francis Drake received for arms from Queen Elizabeth a Fesse waved between two pole-stars, where it stands for the waved surface of the sea, and partly, also, to signify that Sir Francis put a girdle round the earth;[1] and the family of Drummond carries three diminutive Fesses, or bars, waved, because their ancestor brought Queen Margaret safe through many storms.[2]

(4.) The Bend, an oblique bar descending from right to left of the holder of the shield, represents the sword belt. The Latin balteus and balteum are, I believe, the origin of the word. They become bendellus and bendellum; then bandeau and bande. Benda is the word used for the riband round the neck of St. Etheldreda, in the account of her death quoted by Du Cange.[3] I believe, also, the fesse stands often for the cross-bar of the castle gate, and the bend for its very useful diagonal bar: this is only a conjecture, but I believe as likely to be true as the idea, certainly admitted in heraldry, that the bend sometimes stands for a scaling ladder: so also the next four most important ordinaries have all an architectural significance.

(5.) The Pale, an upright bar dividing the shield in half, is simply an upright piece of timber in a palisade. It signifies either defence or enclosure.

(6.) The Pile, a wedge-shaped space of colour with the point downwards, represents what we still call a pile; a piece of timber driven into moist ground to secure the foundation of any building.

(7.) The Canton, a square space of colour in either of the upper corners of the shield, signifies the corner-stone of a building. The origin and various use of this word are very interesting. The Greek *κανθός*, used by Aristotle for the corner of the eyes,[4] becomes canto, and then cantonus.

[1] [Ruskin in his copy here refers to Guillim: see *A Display of Heraldry*, 1724, p. 87.]

[2] [The Drummonds are said to have come over from Hungary with Edgar Atheling and Margaret, Queen of Scots.]

[3] [*Glossarium ad Scriptores Mediæ et Infimæ Latinitatis, auctore Carolo Dufresne, domino Du Cange*, 1733, vol. i., *s.v.* "Benda."]

[4] [*Hist. An.*, i. 9, 2; *Part. An.*, ii. 13, 1.]

The French coin (corner), is usually derived from the Latin cuneus; but I have no doubt it is one corruption of canton: the mediæval-Latin cantonus is either an angle or recess, or a four-square corner-stone. The heraldic canton is the corner-stone of a building, and the French cantonnier is a road-mender, because the essential thing in repairing a road is to get its corner or edge firm.

(8.) The Chevron, a band bent at an angle (properly a right angle), with its point upwards, represents the gable or roof of a house. Thus the four last-named ordinaries represent the four essentials of a fixed habitation: the pale, its enclosure within a given space of ground; the pile, its foundation; the canton, its wall, and the chevron its roof.

(9.) The Orle, a narrow band following the outline of the shield midway between its edge and centre, is a more definite expression of enclosure or fortification by moat or rampart. The relations of this word, no less than that of the canton, are singular, and worth remembering. Du Cange quotes[1] under it an order of the municipality of Piacenza, that always, in the custom-house where the salt-tax was taken, "a great orled disk" should be kept; "dischus magnus orlatus," *i.e.*, a large plate, with a rim, in which every day fresh salt should be placed. Then note that the word disk is used in the Middle Ages, either for a plate, or a table, (the "holy disk" is the patina of the sacrament), but most generally for a table, whence you get the old German disch; our dish; the French disner, diner; and our dinner. The disk cut out into a ring becomes a quoit, which is the simplest form of orle. The word "orle" itself comes, I believe, from ora, in old Latin, which took a diminutive, orula; or perhaps the "l" was put in merely to distinguish, to the ear, a margined thing, "orlatus," from a gilded thing, "auratus." It stands for the hem of a robe, or the fillet of a crown, as well as for any margin; and it is given as an ordinary to such as have afforded

[1] [Du Cange: s.v. "Orlatus."]

protection and defence, because it defends what is within it. Reduced to a narrow band, it becomes a "Tressure." If you have a sovereign of 1860 to 1870 in your pocket, and look at the right-hand upper corner of the Queen's arms, you will see the Scottish Lion within the tressure decorated with fleur-de-lys, which Scotland bears in memory of her treaty with Charlemagne.

(10.) The Gyron, a triangular space of colour with its point in the centre of the shield, derives its name from the old Latin gyro, a fold, "pars vestis quâ laxior fit, et in superiori parte contracta, in largiorem formam in imo se explicat."[1] The heraldic "gyron," however, also has a collateral reference to, and root in, the word "gremium," bosom or lap; and it signifies properly the chief fold or fall of the dress either over the bosom, or between the knees; and has whatever symbolic expression may be attributed to that fold, as a sign of kindness or protection. The influence of the lines taken by softly falling drapery in giving gentleness to the action of figures was always felt by the Gothic artists as one of the chief elements of design; and the two constantly repeated figures of Christ holding souls in the "gremium" of His robe, and of the Madonna casting hers over suppliants, gave an inevitably recognized association to them.

(11.) The Flasque, a space of colour terminated by a curved line on each flank of the shield, derives its name from the Latin flecto, and is the bearing of honour given for successful embassy. It must be counted among the ordinaries, but is of rare occurrence in what groups of authentic bearings I have examined.

(12.) The Saltire, from salir, represents the securest form of machine for mounting walls; it has partly the same significance as the ladder of the Scaligers, but, being properly an ordinary, and not a bearing, has the wider general meaning of successful ascent, not that of mere local attack. As a bearing, it is the St. Andrew's Cross.

[1] [Du Cange: vol. iii. p. 1018.]

286. These twelve forms of ordinary then, or first colour divisions of the shield, represent symbolically the establishment, defence, and exaltation of the Knight's house by his Christian courage; and are in this symbolism, different from all other military bearings. They are throughout essentially founded on the "quartering" or division of the field into four spaces by the sign of the Cross: and the history of the chivalry of Europe is absolutely that of the connection of domestic honour with Christian faith, and of the exaltation of these two sentiments into the highest enthusiasm by cultivated imagination.

The means of this culture by the finer arts; the errors, or falls, of the enthusiasm so excited; its extinction by avarice, pride, and lust, in the period of the (so called) Renaissance, and the possibility of a true Renaissance, or Restoration, of courage and pure hope to Christian men in their homes and industries, must form the general subject of the study into which I have henceforth to lead you. In a future course of lectures[1] it will be my endeavour to show you, in the elementary forms of Christian architecture, the evidence of such mental development and decline in Europe from the tenth to the seventeenth century; but remember that my power or any one else's, to show you truths of this kind, must depend entirely on the degree of sympathy you have in yourselves with what is decorous and generous. I use both these words advisedly, and distinctively, for every high quality of art consists either in some expression of what is decent,—becoming,—or disciplined in character, or of what is bright and generous in the forces of human life.

I need not say that I fear no want of such sympathy in you; yet the circumstances in which you are placed are in many respects adverse to it.

287. I find, on returning to the University after a period of thirty years, the scope of its teaching greatly extended,[2]

[1] [See *Val d'Arno*, §§ 73, 74 (Vol. XXIII. pp. 46–47).]
[2] [Compare the Preface to Xenophon's *Economist*, § 26.]

the zeal of its masters certainly undiminished; and, as far as I can judge, the feeling of the younger members of the University better, and their readiness to comply with all sound advice, greater, than in my time. What scandals there have been among us, I think have been in great part accidental, and consequent chiefly on the intense need for excitement of some trivial kind, which is provoked by our restless and competitive work. In temper, in general amenability to right guidance, and in their sense of the advantages open to them, more may now be hoped than ever yet from the students of Oxford—one thing only I find wanting to them altogether—distinctness of aim.

288. In their new schools of science they learn the power of machinery and of physical elements, but not that of the soul; I am afraid, in our new schools of liberal religion they learn rather to doubt their own faiths than to look with patience or respect on those of others; and in our new schools of policy, to efface the canons of the past, without having formed any distinct conception of those which must regulate the institutions of the future.

289. It is therefore a matter of very deep rejoicing to me that, in bringing before your examination the best forms of English art, I am necessarily leading you to take interest in the history of your country at the time when, so to speak, it became England. You see how, in every college which is now extending or renewing its buildings, the adopted style is approximately that of the thirteenth century;—it being felt, and rightly felt, by a continually-extending instinct, that only then the national mind had unimpaired power of ideal conception. Whatever else we may have advanced in, there is no dispute that, in the great arts, we have steadily, since that thirteenth century, declined: and I have, therefore, since accepting this professorship, partly again taken up my abandoned idea of writing the story of that century, at least in England;[1] of writing it, or, at all

[1] [Compare the address on "Architecture in France," § 3 (Vol. XIX. p. 462).]

events, collecting it, with the help of my pupils, if they care to help me. By myself, I can do nothing; yet I should not ask them to help me if I were not certain that at this crisis of our national existence the fixing the minds of young and old upon the customs and conception of chivalry is the best of all moral education. One thing I solemnly desire to see all children taught—obedience; and one to all persons entering into life—the power of unselfish admiration.

240. The incident which I have related in my fourth lecture on sculpture,[1] seen by me last year on the bridge of Wallingford, is a sufficient example of the courtesies in which we are now bringing up our peasant children. Do you think that any science or art we can teach them will make them happy under such conditions? Nay, in what courtesy or in what affection are we even now carefully training ourselves;—above all, in what form of duty or reverence to those to whom we owe all our power of understanding even what duty or reverence means? I warned you in my former lecture[2] against the base curiosity of seeking for the origin of life in the dust; in earth instead of heaven: how much more must I warn you against forgetting the true origin of the life that is in your own souls, of that good which you have heard with your ears, and your fathers have told you.[3] You buy the picture of the Virgin as furniture for your rooms; but you despise the religion, and you reject the memory, of those who have taught you to love the aspect of whatsoever things and creatures are good and pure:[4] and too many of you, entering into life, are ready to think, to feel, to act, as the men bid you who are incapable of worship, as they are of creation;—whose power is only in destruction: whose gladness only in disdain; whose glorying is in their shame. You know well, I should think by this time, that I am

[1] [The third, as published: see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 89 (Vol. XX. p. 260).]
[2] [Lecture VIII.: see especially pp. 236 *seq.*]
[3] [See Psalms xliv. 1.]
[4] [Philippians iv. 8; quoted in Vol. V. p. 58.]

not one to seek to conceal from you any truth of nature, or superstitiously decorate for you any form of faith; but I trust deeply—(and I will strive, for my poor part, wholly, so to help you in steadfastness of heart)—that you, the children of the Christian chivalry which was led in England by the Lion-Heart, and in France by Roland, and in Spain by the Cid,[1] may not stoop to become as these, whose thoughts are but to invent new foulness with which to blaspheme the story of Christ, and to destroy the noble works and laws that have been founded in His name.

Will you not rather go round about this England and tell the towers thereof, and mark well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces, that you may tell it to the generation following?[2] Will you not rather honour with all your strength, with all your obedience, with all your holy love and never-ending worship, the princely sires, and pure maids, and nursing mothers, who have bequeathed and blest your life?—that so, for you also, and for your children, the days of strength, and the light of memory, may be long in this lovely land which the Lord your God has given you.[3]

[1] [For these types of chivalry, see, for Cœur de Lion, Vol. XIX. pp. 391–392; for Roland, an incidental reference in Vol. IX. p. 103, and *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 43, 60; and for the Cid, *Queen of the Air*, § 46 (Vol. XIX. p. 347).]

[2] [Psalms xlviii. 13; compare *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 19 (Vol. XII. p. 38).]

[3] [Exodus xx. 12.]

IV

# ARIADNE FLORENTINA

(LECTURES DELIVERED, 1872;
PUBLISHED, 1873–1876)

# ARIADNE FLORENTINA.

## SIX LECTURES

ON

## WOOD AND METAL ENGRAVING.

*WITH APPENDIX.*

GIVEN BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
IN MICHAELMAS TERM, 1872.

By JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,
HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1876.

[*Bibliographical Note.*—The lectures, published under the title *Ariadne Florentina*, were delivered before the University of Oxford in the Taylorian Building in Michaelmas Term, 1872, the subject of the course being announced as "Sandro Botticelli and the Florentine Schools of Engraving." The dates of the lectures were Saturday in each week, from November 2 to December 7, each lecture being repeated to a general audience on the following Thursday. The first announcement (*Oxford University Gazette*, October 11, 1872) stated that the Thursday lectures would be for members of the University. The second announcement (October 22) said:—

> "The Lecture on Saturdays will be for members of the University only; on Thursdays, public. It was otherwise stated in the former notice; but the present arrangement is adopted in order that members of the Drawing Class may have more leisure to arrange their notes of each Lecture, so as to confirm them, if they wish, at its repetition.
>
> "The Slade Professor will be glad to see any gentlemen wishing to attend the Course for purposes of study, at the University Galleries, on Thursday, October 31, at two o'clock."

## FIRST PUBLICATION IN SEPARATE NUMBERS

The lectures were first published in separate parts, the preliminary announcement giving "Facinora Dierum" as the title. The title-pages of the separate parts were as follow:—

I. Definition of the Art of Engraving. | G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent. | 1873.

Issued in November 1873.

II. The Relation of Engraving to other Arts in Florence. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1874.

Issued in December 1873.

III. The Technics of Wood Engraving. | George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1874.

Issued in February 1874.

IV. The Technics of Metal Engraving. | George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1874.

Issued in October 1874.

V. Design in the German Schools of Engraving. | George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1875.

Issued in February 1875.

VI. Design in the Florentine Schools of Engraving. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1875.

Issued in July 1875.

VII. (Appendix). Pages i.–vi. of the volume described below.

Issued in September 1876.

These numbers had a Half-title (with blank reverse), pp. i.–ii.; then (pp. iii.–iv.) a Title-page (as just described), on the reverse of which was the imprint—"Watson and Hazell, Printers, London and Aylesbury." Next (pp. v.–vi.) an Advice (with blank reverse); and (pp. vii.–viii.) Contents of the six lectures (with blank reverse).

The Advice to Lectures I.–III. was as follows:—

"ADVICE

"I publish these lectures for immediate reference, as I can find time, with only such illustrations as are absolutely necessary; but the expense of preparing even these obliges me to set a price of two shillings and sixpence each on the last four of the series. The first two, unillustrated, will be sold each for a shilling. The whole series will thus form a twelve-shilling book; and on subsequent completion, if ever I find leisure for it, one of my guinea volumes.[1]

"BRANTWOOD,
"*8th September*, 1873."

The Advice to Lectures IV.–VI. was as follows:—

"ADVICE

"The publication of these lectures has been delayed by some re-arrangement of the text, which I thought it advisable to make in order to bring the entire series at once into permanent form. There will in consequence be no changes made in subsequent editions, but a supplementary number, containing Appendix and two additional plates, will follow the six lectures already announced, at the same price as the illustrated ones; the entire series, unbound, thus costing its first subscribers only 14s. 6d. But after the publication of the last number it will be sold only in bound form, constituting the seventh volume of the general series of my works, at 27s. 6d. per copy. The difficulty of providing three facsimile woodcuts, and some other of the illustrations, is so great that I must strictly limit the number of copies; and the market price, judging from that of my other books at present out of print, is not likely to fall below my publishing one."

The seven numbers were issued in paper wrappers of a pale grey colour, with the title-page (enclosed in a double-ruled frame) reproduced upon the front, the Rose being added above the publisher's imprint, and "Price One Shilling" or "Price Half-a-Crown," below the imprint. The word "Appendix" appears upon the wrapper of Number VII., and also the date "1876."

[1] See Vol. XVIII. pp. 10–11.

Two thousand copies of each number were printed, but 500 only of Parts III.–VII. were put up in wrappers, and the unsold copies of Parts I. and II. were used to make up the copies of the volume next described.

## EDITIONS IN COLLECTED FORM

*First Edition* (1876).—The numbers were collected in 1876 as Volume VII. of the "Works" Series, the general title-page being as follows:—

> The | Works of John Ruskin, | Honorary Student of Christ Church, Oxford. | Volume VII. | Ariadne Florentina. | [*Rose*] | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1876.

The particular title-page was as shown here (p. 291). Octavo, pp. vi. + 266. At the foot of the reverse of the particular title-page was the imprint —"Hazell, Watson & Viney, Printers, London and Aylesbury." Contents (here p. 299), pp. v.–vi.; Text of the Lectures, pp. 1–224; Notes, pp. 225–227; Appendix, pp. 229–266. The imprint is repeated at the foot of the last page. Each lecture has its number and title as headline across the open page.

Issued in December 1876 in purple calf, uniform with earlier volumes in the "Works" Series, lettered across the back "Ruskin. | Works. | Vol. | VII. | Ariadne Florentina." Price 27s. 6d. In July 1882 some copies were put up in mottled-grey paper boards, with white paper label on the back, which reads "Ruskin. | Works. | Vol. VII. | Ariadne | Florentina." Price 22s. 6d.

There was no list of the illustrations in this edition (see for some details the note on the illustrations in the edition next described).

A peculiarity of the edition is that in Lectures I. to V. the paragraphs were numbered consecutively §§ 1–177, but that in Lecture VI. they start afresh §§ 1–45. The Notes are numbered I. and II. The paragraphs of the Appendix are not numbered.

*Second Edition* (1891).—This edition was a reprint of the first; but a List of Plates was added. It was printed by Hazell, Watson and Viney; and the publisher's imprint was "George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1891."

Issued in December 1891 (500 copies). In March 1893 copies were put up in cloth (14s. 6d., calf 20s.), lettered on the back "Ruskin | Vol. VII. | Ariadne | Florentina." The price was reduced in July 1900 to 12s. 6d. cloth, and 19s. 6d. calf. This edition is still current.

*Small Edition* (1890).—The title-page is as follows:—

> Ariadne Florentina. | Six Lectures | on | Wood and Metal Engraving. | With Appendix. | Given before the University of Oxford, | in Michaelmas Term, 1872. | By John Ruskin, LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, | and | 8, Bell Yard, Temple Bar, London. | 1890. | [*All rights reserved.*]

Small crown 8vo, pp. viii. + 298. At the foot of the reverse of the title-page is the imprint—"Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury" (repeated at the foot of the last page). Contents, pp. v.–vi.;

List of Plates, pp. vii.–viii.; Text of the Lectures, pp. 1–252; Notes, pp. 253–255; Appendix, pp. 256–296. Headlines as in the first edition.

Issued on July 21, 1890, both in chocolate and in dark green coloured cloth, lettered across the back "Ruskin. | Ariadne | Florentina." Price 7s. 6d. 3000 copies. This edition is still current.

There were no alterations in the text, except the correction of a few misprints (*e.g.*, "Donstello" opposite § 52; and in § 54, "Benozzo, Gozzoli" and "Mino da Ficsole"; § 124 *n.*, "for instance") and the addition of some references. For instance, in § 4 *n.*, "My inaugural series of seven lectures, published at the Clarendon Press" was altered to "My . . . lectures (now published uniform in size with this edition, 1890)"; in § 115 *n.* the reference to "On the Old Road" was added; and in § 185, the reference to *Fors Clavigera* "(Letter XXII.)." The paragraphs were now numbered consecutively throughout—§§ 1–176 as before; the final paragraph of § 177 was numbered §§ 177, 178, 179, 180. The paragraphs of the sixth lecture and notes (separately numbered in ed. 1), and those of the Appendix (not numbered in ed. 1), were in this edition numbered continuously with the preceding portions of the book.

The above corrections, etc., were editorial, and not those of Ruskin himself.

The "List of Plates" was as follows:—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|---|---|---|
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The *diagram* was the same in all editions.

Figs. 2 and 3 are the same in all editions.

Plate 1 was the same in eds. 1 and 2 (autotype); it was slightly reduced for the small edition; in this edition it is a woodcut.

Plate 2 was the same in all previous editions (autotype); it is now reproduced larger (the size of the original) by photogravure.

The same remarks apply to Plates 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12.

Plate 5 was the same in all previous editions (printed in brown, instead of black, in the second and small editions); autotype. Now photogravure.

Plate 6 was the same in all previous editions (woodcut). It is not included in this volume, the subjects having been transferred to *Aratra Pentelici* (see Vol. XX., Plates XIV. and XV.).

Figs. 5 and 6 are the same in all editions.

Plate 10. This has been of the same size in all previous editions; autotype. But in ed. 1 the plate was printed from a very poor impression of the engraving, with lines round it. In the second and small editions a new plate was made from a better impression. Now photogravure.

In eds. 1 and 2 the last two plates were not numbered.

In Plate XXXI. of this volume (No. 7 in the above list) the stains are on the impression of the engraving from which the photogravure is made. In the autotypes of previous editions these were cleared away, to the detriment of the accuracy of the result and to the obscuring of the lettering. A similar remark applies, in a less degree, to some other of the reproductions of early Italian engravings.

An *authorised American* ("Brantwood") edition was issued in 1891 by Messrs. Charles E. Merrill, with an Introduction by Professor Charles Eliot Norton (pp. v.–xiii.).

*Unauthorised American Editions* have appeared, with and without the illustrations.

The book was not sent out for *review*, and no notices appeared in the press; there is, however, a reference to it in the list of "Authorities" appended to P. G. Hamerton's article on "Engraving" in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

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*Variæ Lectiones.*—The text was never revised by the author, and there are thus no variations to record hitherto (other than the editorial corrections noted above). In this edition some further corrections have been made. Thus, in § 5, the citation from *Lectures on Art* has been revised in accordance with the author's revision of that book. In § 62, line 18, the word "first" has been inserted to make the reference clear. "Bandini" is corrected to "Baldini" (§§ 128, 129, 131, 133). A reference is omitted in § 162 (see p. 406 *n.*); and in § 254, author's note (*), a wrong reference (*Eagle's Nest*, § 79 for § 69) is corrected. In § 117, line 18, "Desmoyers" in all previous editions is here corrected to "Desnoyers." In § 152, line 6, previous editions read ". . . Royal Academy—years ago —stood. . . ." But the picture in question stood there only four years before (see p. 398 *n.*). It is clear, therefore, that Ruskin wrote "—— years ago," meaning to fill in the blank, and that the text as it has hitherto appeared is a misprint. In § 210, line 8, the small editions misprint "assume" (instead of "assure"). In § 228, the author's second note, a page reference to *Fors Clavigera* is now omitted. Some misprints in the quotation from Virgil are corrected; likewise some inaccuracies in those from Shakespeare. In § 245, line 7, "first" is corrected to "fourth." For a correction in § 256, six lines from the end, see p. 486 *n.*

Some corrections have also been made in accordance with Ruskin's instructions in his own copy of the book:—

In § 1, line 3, "pointedly" has been substituted for "doubtfully"; in § 18, line 12, the words "or effects of light" after "light and shade"

are here omitted; in § 121, line 13, "matter" is altered to "subject"; in § 140, third line from end, the dash and the note of exclamation are added; in § 185, the last lines are altered in accordance with Ruskin's copy; previous editions have read, "It will not waste your time if I read,—instead of merely giving you reference to,—the passages on which I must comment." In § 198, lines 7, 8, the present text is Ruskin's correction for "It may be—happy the children to whom it is—the actual father also; and whose parents . . ."; line 16, "revered" is his correction for "reverenced."]

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# ARIADNE FLORENTINA

## LECTURE I[1]

### DEFINITION OF THE ART OF ENGRAVING

1. THE entrance on my duty for to-day begins the fourth year of my official work in Oxford; and I doubt not that some of my audience are asking themselves, very pointedly —at all events, I ask myself, very anxiously—what has been done.

For practical result, I have not much to show. I announced, a fortnight since, that I would meet, the day before yesterday, any gentleman who wished to attend this course for purposes of study.[2] My class, so minded, numbers four, of whom three wish to be artists, and ought not therefore, by rights, to be at Oxford at all;[3] and the fourth is the last remaining unit of the class I had last year.

2. Yet I neither in this reproach myself, nor, if I could, would I reproach the students who are not here. I do not reproach myself; for it was impossible for me to attend properly to the schools and to write the grammar for them at the same time; and I do not blame the absent students for not attending a school from which I have generally been absent myself.[4] In all this, there is much to be mended, but, in true light, nothing to be regretted.

I say, I had to write my school grammar. These three

[1] [Delivered on November 2, 1872; Ruskin counts by the academical years, 1869–1870, 1870–1871, 1871–1872, 1872–1873.]

[2] [See the Bibliographical Note; above, p. 293.]

[3] [See on this subject, Vol. XXI. p. 165.]

[4] [Ruskin was, however, in Oxford, lecturing in February and March, and November and December 1870; in January and May 1871; and in February, March, and April 1872.]

volumes of lectures under my hand,* contain, carefully set down, the things I want you first to know. None of my writings are done fluently; the second volume of *Modern Painters* was all of it written twice—most of it, four times,—over; and these lectures have been written, I don't know how many times.[1] You may think that this was done merely in an author's vanity, not in a tutor's care. To the vanity I plead guilty,—no man is more intensely vain than I am; but my vanity is set on having it *known* of me that I am a good master, not in having it *said* of me that I am a smooth author. My vanity is never more wounded than in being called a fine writer, meaning—that nobody need mind what I say.[2]

3. Well, then, besides this vanity, I have some solicitude for your progress. You may give me credit for it or not, as you choose, but it is sincere. And that your advance may be safe, I have taken the best pains I could in laying down laws for it. In these three years I have got my grammar written, and, with the help of many friends, all working instruments in good order; and now we will try what we can do. Not that, even now, you are to depend on my presence with you in personal teaching. I shall henceforward think of the lectures less, of the schools more; but my best work for the schools will often be by drawing in Florence or in Lancashire—not here.

4. I have already told you several times[3] that the course through which I mean every student in these schools should pass, is one which shall enable them to understand the elementary principles of the finest art. It will necessarily be severe, and seem to lead to no immediate result. Some of you will, on the contrary, wish to be taught what is immediately easy, and gives prospect of a manifest success.

* *Inaugural Series, Aratra Pentelici,* and *Eagle's Nest.*

[1] [Compare § 44 *n.*, p. 328; Vol. XX. p. xlix.; and *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 123.]

[2] [Compare p. 125, above.]

[3] [See, for instance, *Lectures on Art*, Vol. XX. pp. 25, 27.]

But suppose they should come to the Professor of Logic and Rhetoric, and tell him they want to be taught to preach like Mr. Spurgeon, or the Bishop of ——.

He would say to them,—I cannot, and if I could I would not, tell you how to preach like Mr. Spurgeon, or the Bishop of ——. Your own character will form your style; your own zeal will direct it; your own obstinacy or ignorance may limit or exaggerate it; but my business is to prevent, as far as I can, your having *any* particular style; and to teach you the laws of all language, and the essential power of your own.

In like manner, this course, which I propose to you in art, will be calculated only to give you judgment and method in future study, to establish to your conviction the laws of general art, and to enable you to draw, if not with genius, at least with sense and propriety.

The course, so far as it consists in practice, will be defined in my Instructions for the schools.[1] And the theory connected with that practice is set down in the three lectures at the end of the first course I delivered—those on Line, Light, and Colour.

You will have, therefore, to get this book,* and it is the only one which you will need to have of your own,—the others are placed, for reference, where they will be accessible to you.

5. In the 189th paragraph it states the order of your practical study in these terms:—

"I wish you to begin by getting command of line;—that is to say, by learning to draw a steady line, limiting with absolute correctness the form or space you intend it to limit; to proceed by getting command over flat tints, so that you may be able to fill the spaces you have enclosed evenly, either with shade or colour, according to

* My inaugural series of seven lectures.[2]

[1] [See the *Instructions in the Preliminary Exercises arranged for the Lower Drawing School*, 1872 (Vol. XXI. pp. 235 *seq.*).]

[2] [See Vol. XX. p. 128.]

the school you adopt; and, finally, to obtain the power of adding such fineness of gradation, within the masses, as shall express their undulation, and their characters of texture."

And now, since in your course of practice you are first required to attain the power of drawing lines accurately and delicately, so in the course of theory, or grammar, I wish you first to learn the principles of linear design, exemplified by the schools which (§ 187[1]) you will find characterized as the Schools of Line.

6. If I had command of as much time as I should like to spend with you on this subject, I would begin with the early forms of art which used the simplest linear elements of design. But, for general service and interest, it will be better that I should sketch what has been accomplished by the greatest masters in that manner; the rather that their work is more or less accessible to all, and has developed into the vast industries of modern engraving, one of the most powerful existing influences of education and sources of pleasure among civilized people.

And this investigation, so far from interrupting, will facilitate our examination of the history of the nobler arts. You will see in the preface to my lectures on Greek sculpture that I intend them to be followed by a course on architecture, and that by one on Florentine sculpture.[2] But the art of engraving is so manifestly, at Florence, though not less essentially elsewhere, a basis of style both in architecture and sculpture, that it is absolutely necessary I should explain to you in what the skill of the engraver consists, before I can define with accuracy that of more admired artists. For engraving, though not altogether in the method of which you see examples in the print-shops of the High Street, is, indeed, a prior art to that either of building or sculpture, and is an inseparable part of both, when they are rightly practised.

[1] [Of the *Lectures on Art:* Vol. XX. p. 126.]
[2] [*Aratra Pentelici,* Preface, § 5 (Vol. XX. p. 196).]

7. And while we thus examine the scope of this first of the arts, it will be necessary that we learn also the scope of mind of the early practisers of it, and accordingly acquaint ourselves with the main events in the biography of the schools of Florence. To understand the temper and meaning of one great master is to lay the best, if not the only, foundation for the understanding of all; and I shall therefore make it the leading aim of this course of lectures to remind you of what is known, and direct you to what is knowable, of the life and character of the greatest Florentine master of engraving, Sandro Botticelli;[1] and, incidentally, to give you some idea of the power of the greatest master of the German, or any northern, school, Hans Holbein.

8. You must feel, however, that I am using the word "engraving" in a somewhat different, and, you may imagine, a wider, sense, than that which you are accustomed to attach to it. So far from being a wider sense, it is in reality a more accurate and restricted one, while yet it embraces every conceivable right application of the art. And I wish, in this first lecture, to make entirely clear to you the proper meaning of the word, and proper range of the art of, engraving; in my next following lecture, to show you its place in Italian schools, and then, in due order, the place it ought to take in our own, and in all schools.

9. First then, to-day, of the Differentia, or essential quality of Engraving, as distinguished from other arts.

What answer would you make to me, if I asked casually what engraving was? Perhaps the readiest which would occur to you would be, "The translation of pictures into black and white by means admitting reduplication of impressions." But if that be done by lithography, we do not call it engraving,—whereas we speak contentedly and

[1] [On the question of engravings attributed to Botticelli, see the Introduction; above, p. xxxviii.]

continually of seal engraving, in which there is no question of black and white. And, as scholars, you know that this customary mode of speaking is quite accurate; and that engraving means, primarily, making a permanent cut or furrow in something. The central syllable of the word has become a sorrowful one, meaning the most permanent of furrows.

10. But are you prepared absolutely to accept this limitation with respect to engraving as a pictorial art? Will you call nothing an engraving, except a group of furrows or cavities cut in a hard substance? What shall we say of mezzotint engraving, for instance, in which, though indeed furrows and cavities are produced mechanically as a ground, the artist's work is in effacing them? And when we consider the power of engraving in representing pictures and multiplying them, are we to recognize and admire no effects of light and shade except those which are visibly produced by dots or furrows? I mean, will the virtue of an engraving be in exhibiting these imperfect means of its effect, or in concealing them?

11. Here, for instance, is the head of a soldier by Dürer,[1]—a mere gridiron of black lines. Would this be better or worse engraving if it were more like a photograph or lithograph, and no lines seen?—suppose, more like the head of Mr. Santley, now in all the music-shops,[2] and really quite deceptive in light and shade, when seen from over the way? Do you think Dürer's work would be better if it were more like that? And would you have me, therefore, leaving the question of technical method of production altogether to the craftsman, consider pictorial engraving simply as the production of a light-and-shade drawing, by some method permitting its multiplication for the public?

12. This, you observe, is a very practical question indeed.

[1] [This example was No. 229 in the Educational Series, but Ruskin afterwards removed it; the head was enlarged from Dürer's "Cannon" (No. 121 in the same series): see now Vol. XIX. p. 69.]

[2] [No doubt a lithographed advertisement-portrait of the well-known singer, exhibited in connexion with some concert at Oxford.]

For instance, the illustrations of my own lectures on sculpture are equivalent to permanent photographs.[1] There can be little doubt that means will be discovered of thus producing perfect facsimiles of artists' drawings; so that, if no more than facsimile be required, the old art of cutting furrows in metal may be considered as, at this day, virtually ended. And, indeed, it is said that line engravers cannot any more get apprentices, and that a pure steel or copper plate is not likely to be again produced, when once the old living masters of the bright field[2] shall have been all laid in their earth-furrows.

13. Suppose, then, that this come to pass; and more than this, suppose that wood engraving also be superseded, and that instead of imperfect transcripts of drawings, on wood-blocks or metal-plates, photography enabled us to give, quite cheaply, and without limit to number, facsimiles of the finished light-and-shade drawings of artists themselves. Another group of questions instantly offers itself, on these new conditions; namely, What are the best means for a light-and-shade drawing—the pen, or the pencil, the charcoal, or the flat wash? That is to say, the pen, producing shade by black lines, as old engraving did; the pencil, producing shade by grey lines, variable in force; the charcoal, producing a smoky shadow with no lines in it, or the washed tint, producing a transparent shadow with no lines in it. Which of these methods is the best?—or have they, each and all, virtues to be separately studied, and distinctively applied?

14. See how curiously the questions multiply on us. 1st, Is engraving to be only considered as cut work? 2nd, For present designs multipliable without cutting, by the sunshine, what methods or instruments of drawing will be

[1] [In the original edition the illustrations to *Aratra Pentelici* were for the most part autotypes. The improvement of photogravure processes since Ruskin spoke has been very marked.]

[2] [Compare the phrase—"I do not know a more solemn field of labour than that *champ d'acier*"—in *The Cestus of Aglaia*, § 51 (Vol. XIX. p. 101); and, for the threatened extinction of steel-engraving, *ibid.*, § 37 (pp. 88–89).]

best? And now, 3rdly, before we can discuss these questions at all, is there not another lying at the root of both, —namely, what a light-and-shade drawing itself properly *is*, and how it differs, or should differ, from a painting, whether by mere deficiency, or by some entirely distinct merit?

15. For instance, you know how confidently it is said, in common talk about Turner, that his works are intelligible and beautiful when engraved, though incomprehensible as paintings. Admitting this to be so, do you suppose it is because the translation into light and shade is deficient in some qualities which the painting had, or that it possesses some quality which the painting had not? Does it please more because it is deficient in the colour which confused a feeble spectator, and offended a dogmatic one, —or because it possesses a decision in its steady linear labour which interprets, or corrects, the swift pencilling of the artist?[1]

16. Do you notice the two words I have just used, *Decision*, and *Linear?* — Decision, again introducing the idea of cuts or divisions, as opposed to gradations; Linear, as opposed to massive or broad?

Yet we use all these words at different times in praise, while they evidently mark inconsistent qualities. Softness and decision, breadth and delineation, cannot co-exist in equal degrees. There must surely therefore be a virtue in the engraving inconsistent with that of the painting, and *vice versâ*.

Now, be clear about these three questions which we have to-day to answer.

A. Is all engraving to be cut work?

B. If it need not be cut work, but only the reproduction of a drawing, what methods of executing a light-and-shade drawing will be best?

[1] [For a discussion of the reason why Turner's paintings engrave well, see *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 299).]

C. Is the shaded drawing itself to be considered only as a deficient or imperfect painting, or as a different thing from a painting, having a virtue of its own, belonging to black and white, as opposed to colour?

17. I will give you the answers at once, briefly, and amplify them afterwards.

A. All engraving must be cut work;—*that* is its differentia. Unless your effect be produced by cutting into some solid substance, it is not engraving at all.

B. The proper methods for light-and-shade drawing vary according to subject, and the degree of completeness desired,—some of them having much in common with engraving, and others with painting.

C. The qualities of a light-and-shade drawing ought to be entirely different from those of a painting. It is not a deficient or partial representation of a coloured scene or picture, but an entirely different reading of either. So that much of what is intelligible in a painting ought to be unintelligible in a light-and-shade study, and *vice versâ*.

You have thus three arts,—engraving, light-and-shade drawing, and painting.

Now I am not going to lecture, in this course, on painting, nor on light-and-shade drawing, but on engraving only. But I must tell you something about light-and-shade drawing first; or, at least, remind you of what I have before told.

18. You see that the three elementary lectures in my first volume are on Line, Light, and Colour,—that is to say, on the modes of art which produce linear designs,—which produce effects of light,—and which produce effects of colour.

I must, for the sake of new students, briefly repeat the explanation of these.

Here is an Arabian vase, in which the pleasure given to the eye is only by lines;—no effect of light, or of colour,

is attempted. Here is a moonlight by Turner, in which there are no lines at all, and no colours at all.[1] The pleasure given to the eye is only by modes of light and shade. Finally, here is an early Florentine painting, in which there are no lines of importance, and no effect of light whatever; but all the pleasure given to the eye is in gaiety and variety of colour.[2]

19. I say, the pleasure given to the *eye*. The lines on this vase write something; but the ornamentation produced by the beautiful writing is independent of its meaning. So the moonlight is pleasant, first, as light; and the figures, first, as colour. It is not the shape of the waves, but the light on them; not the expression of the figures, but their colour, by which the *ocular* pleasure is to be given.

These three examples are violently marked ones; but in preparing to draw *any* object, you will find that, practically, you have to ask yourself, Shall I aim at the colour of it, the light of it, or the lines of it? You can't have all three; you can't even have any two out of the three in equal strength. The best art, indeed, comes so near nature as in a measure to unite all. But the best is not, and cannot be, as good as nature; and the mode of its deficiency is that it must lose some of the colour, some of the light, or some of the delineation. And in consequence, there is one great school which says, We will have the colour, and as much light and delineation as are consistent with it. Another which says, We will have shade, and as much colour and delineation as are consistent with it. The third, We will have delineation, and as much colour and shade as are consistent with it.[3]

20. And though much of the two subordinate qualities

[1] [Here Ruskin showed Turner's mezzotint, "Moonlight off the Needles" (one of his unpublished plates). A photograph of the drawing (in the Vaughan Collection) was formerly No. 295 in the Educational Series, but afterwards removed (Vol. XXI. p. 101).]

[2] [Here Ruskin perhaps showed "The Birth of the Virgin," by Taddeo Gaddi: see the note on the next page.]

[3] [With this classification compare the hexagonal table in *Lectures on Art*, § 139 (Vol. XX. p. 128).]

may in each school be consistent with the leading one, yet the schools are evermore separate: as, for instance, in other matters, one man says, I will have my fee, and as much honesty as is consistent with it; another, I will have my honesty, and as much fee as is consistent with it. Though the man who will have his fee be subordinately honest,—though the man who will have his honour, subordinately rich, are they not evermore of diverse schools?[1]

So you have, in art, the utterly separate provinces, though in contact at their borders, of

The Delineators;
The Chiaroscurists; and
The Colourists.

21. The Delineators are the men on whom I am going to give you this course of lectures. They are essentially engravers, an engraved line being the best means of delineation. The Chiaroscurists are essentially draughtsmen with chalk, charcoal, or single tints. Many of them paint, but always with some effort and pain. Leonardo is the type of them; but the entire Dutch school consists of them, laboriously painting, without essential genius for colour.

The Colourists are the true painters; and all the faultless (as far, that is to say, as men's work can be so) and consummate masters of art belong to them.[2]

22. The distinction between the colourist and chiaroscurist school is trenchant and absolute: and may soon be shown you so that you will never forget it. Here is a Florentine picture by one of the pupils of Giotto, of very good representative quality, and which the University Galleries are rich in possessing.[3] At the distance at which

[1] [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 32 (Vol. XVIII. p. 413).]

[2] [Compare the beginning of the lecture on Botticelli in *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Art in Florence* (Vol. XXIII.).]

[3] [The only picture at all answering to this description in the University Galleries is No. 3, ascribed to Taddeo Gaddi. But the subject of it is "The Birth of the Virgin," and, though Ruskin's description is generically appropriate, it does not correspond with the details of the picture. Ruskin no doubt trusted this part of the lecture to extempore delivery (as was his habit when explaining pictures shown at the lectures). In preparing the lecture for publication, he must have trusted to his recollection of the picture, which he had no longer before him.]

I hold it, you see nothing but a chequer-work of brilliant, and, as it happens, even glaring colours. If you come near, you will find this patchwork resolve itself into a Visitation, and Birth of St. John; but that St. Elizabeth's red dress, and the Virgin's blue and white one, and the brown posts of the door, and the blue spaces of the sky, are painted in their own entirely pure colours, each shaded with more powerful tints of itself,—pale blue with deep blue, scarlet with crimson, yellow with orange, and green with richer green.

The whole is therefore as much a mosaic work of brilliant colour as if it were made of bits of glass. There is no effect of light attempted, or so much as thought of: you don't know even where the sun is: nor have you the least notion what time of day it is. The painter thinks you cannot be so superfluous as to want to know what time of day it is.

28. Here, on the other hand, is a Dutch picture of good average quality, also out of the University Galleries.[1] It represents a group of cattle, and a herdsman watching them. And you see in an instant that the time is evening. The sun is setting, and there is warm light on the landscape, the cattle, and the standing figure.

Nor does the picture in any conspicuous way seem devoid of colour. On the contrary, the herdsman has a scarlet jacket, which comes out rather brilliantly from the mass of shade round it; and a person devoid of colour faculty, or ill taught, might imagine the picture to be really a fine work of colour.

But if you will come up close to it, you will find that the herdsman has brown sleeves, though he has a scarlet jacket; and that the shadows of both are painted with precisely the same brown, and in several places with continuous touches of the pencil. It is only in the light that the scarlet is laid on.

This at once marks the picture as belonging to the

[1] [No. 53: "Landscape, Figures, Sheep and Cattle." Formerly ascribed to Wyck, but Cuyp's signature is on the stone in the centre of the foreground.]

lower or chiaroscurist school, even if you had not before recognized it as such by its pretty rendering of sunset effect.

24. You might at first think it a painting which showed greater skill than that of the school of Giotto. But the skill is not the primary question. The power of imagination is the first thing to be asked about. This Italian work imagines, and requires you to imagine also, a St. Elizabeth and St. Mary, to the best of your power. But this Dutch one only wishes you to imagine an effect of sunlight on cow-skin, which is a far lower strain of the imaginative faculty.

Also, as you may see the effect of sunlight on cow-skin, in reality, any summer afternoon, but cannot so frequently see a St. Elizabeth, it is a far less useful strain of the imaginative faculty.

And, generally speaking, the Dutch chiaroscurists are indeed persons without imagination at all,—who, not being able to get any pleasure out of their thoughts, try to get it out of their sensations; note, however, also their technical connection with the Greek school of shade (see my sixth inaugural lecture, § 158[1]), in which colour was refused, not for the sake of deception, but of solemnity.

25. With these final motives you are not now concerned; your present business is the quite easy one of knowing, and noticing, the universal distinction between the methods of treatment in which the aim is light, and in which it is colour; and so to keep yourselves guarded from the danger of being misled by the, often very ingenious, talk of persons who have vivid colour sensations without having learned to distinguish them from what else pleases them in pictures. There is an interesting volume by Professor Taine on the Dutch school,[2] containing a valuable historical analysis of the influences which formed it; but

[1] [Vol. XX. p. 153.]

[2] [*Philosophie de l'Art dans les Pays-Bas;* at p. 53 will be found the author's praise of "the excellence and delicacy" of the colouring of the school. For another reference to the book, see *Art of England,* § 211.]

full of the gravest errors, resulting from the confusion in his mind between colour and tone, in consequence of which he imagines the Dutch painters to be colourists.

26. It is so important for you to be grounded securely in these first elements of pictorial treatment, that I will be so far tedious as to show you one more instance of the relative intellectual value of the pure colour and pure chiaroscuro school, not in Dutch and Florentine, but in English art. Here is a copy of one of the lost frescoes of our Painted Chamber of Westminster;[1]—fourteenth-century work, entirely conceived in colour, and calculated for decorative effect. There is no more light and shade in it than in a Queen of Hearts in a pack of cards;—all that the painter at first wants you to see is that the young lady has a white forehead, and a golden crown, and a fair neck, and a violet robe, and a crimson shield with golden leopards on it; and that behind her is clear blue sky. Then, farther, he wants you to read her name, "Debonnaireté," which, when you have read, he farther expects you to consider what it is to be debonnaire, and to remember your Chaucer's description of the virtue:—

> "She was not brown, nor dun of hue,
> But white as snowe, fallen new,
> With eyen glad, and browes bent,
> Her hair down to her heeles went,
> And she was simple, as dove on tree,
> Full debonnair of heart was she."[2]

27. You see Chaucer dwells on the colour just as much as the painter does, but the painter has also given

[1] [Here Ruskin showed the drawing reduced by photogravure in Plate XXIV. It is one of several drawings made by Edward Crocker, Clerk of the Works during the alterations at Westminster Hall in 1819; they are copies in colour (scale, 1½ inches to a foot) of the frescoes (painted about 1275) in the "Painted Chamber" of the Palace of Westminster; the chamber and the remains of its paintings were wholly destroyed after the fire of 1834. Crocker's drawings are in the Douce Collection at Oxford, and are kept in the University Galleries. For an account of the Painted Chamber and its adornments, see an article by Mr. W. R. Lethaby in the *Burlington Magazine*, July 1905. For another reference to the figure, see *Val d'Arno*, §§ 200, 212.]

[2] [*The Romaunt of the Rose*, 1213, 1214, 1217–1220. See *Bible of Amiens*, ii. § 28 *n.*, where Ruskin cites the French lines. Compare also *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 91.]

**Debonnaireté**

(From the fresco of the Painted Chamber of Westminster)

her the English shield to bear, meaning that good-humour, or debonnaireté, cannot be maintained by self-indulgence;—only by fortitude. Farther note, with Chaucer, the "eyen glad," and brows "bent" (high-arched and calm), the strong life (hair down to the heels), and that her gladness is to be without subtlety,—that is to say, without the slightest pleasure in any form of advantage-taking, or any shrewd or mocking wit: "she was simple as dove on tree;" and you will find that the colour-painting, both in the fresco and in the poem, is in the very highest degree didactic and intellectual; and distinguished, as being so, from all inferior forms of art. Farther, that it requires you yourself first to understand the nature of simplicity, and to like simplicity in young ladies better than subtlety; and to understand why the second of Love's five kind arrows (Beauté being the first)—

> "Simplece ot nom, la seconde
> Qui maint homme parmi le monde
> Et mainte dame fait amer."

Nor must you leave the picture without observing that there is another reason for Debonnaireté's bearing the Royal shield,—of all shields that, rather than another. "Debonneaire" meant originally "out of a good eagle's nest," the "aire" signifying the eagle's nest or eyrie especially, because it is flat, the Latin "area" being the root of all.[1]

And this coming out of a good nest is recognized as, of all things, needfullest to give the strength which enables people to be good-humoured; and thus you have "debonnaire" forming the third word of the group, with "gentle" and "kind," all first signifying "of good race."

You will gradually see, as we go on, more and more why I called my third volume of lectures Eagle's Nest; for I am not fantastic in these titles, as is often said; but try shortly to mark my chief purpose in the book by them.[2]

[1] [Compare the Introduction; above, p. xxxv.]
[2] [On this subject compare Vol. XVI. p. lxviii.]

28. Now for comparison with this old art, here is a modern engraving, in which colour is entirely ignored; and light and shade alone are used to produce what is supposed to be a piece of impressive religious instruction. But it is not a piece of religious instruction at all;—only a piece of religious sensation, prepared for the sentimental pleasure of young ladies; whom (since I am honoured to-day by the presence of many) I will take the opportunity of warning against such forms of false theological satisfaction. This engraving represents a young lady in a very long and, though plain, very becoming white dress, tossed upon the waves of a terrifically stormy sea, by which neither her hair nor her becoming dress is in the least wetted; and saved from despair in that situation by closely embracing a very thick and solid stone Cross. By which far-sought and original metaphor young ladies are expected, after some effort, to understand the recourse they may have, for support, to the Cross of Christ, in the midst of the troubles of this world.[1]

29. As those troubles are for the present, in all probability, limited to the occasional loss of their thimbles when they have not taken care to put them into their workboxes, —the concern they feel at the unsympathizing gaiety of their companions,—or perhaps the disappointment at not hearing a favourite clergyman preach,—(for I will not suppose the young ladies interested in this picture to be affected by any chagrin at the loss of an invitation to a ball, or the like worldliness,)—it seems to me the stress of such calamities might be represented, in a picture, by less appalling imagery. And I can assure my fair little lady friends,—if I still have any,—that whatever a young girl's ordinary troubles or annoyances may be, her true virtue is in shaking them off, as a rose-leaf shakes off rain, and remaining debonnaire and bright in spirits, or even, as the rose would be, the brighter for the troubles; and not at all in allowing herself to be

[1] [A popular print called "The Rock of Ages," by Oertal, who did also a companion subject, called "Charity," which shows one woman, already on the stone cross, helping another out of the sea.]

either drifted or depressed to the point of requiring religious consolation. But if any real and deep sorrow, such as no metaphor can represent, fall upon her, does she suppose that the theological advice of this piece of modern art can be trusted? If she will take the pains to think truly, she will remember that Christ Himself never says anything about holding by His Cross. He speaks a good deal of bearing it;[1] but never for an instant of holding by it. It is His Hand, not His Cross, which is to save either you, or St. Peter, when the waves are rough. And the utterly reckless way in which modern religious teachers, whether in art or literature, abuse the metaphor somewhat briefly and violently leant on by St. Paul, simply prevents your understanding the meaning of any word which Christ Himself speaks on this matter! So you see this popular art of light and shade, catching you by your mere thirst of sensation, is not only undidactic, but the reverse of didactic—deceptive and illusory.

80. This *popular* art, you hear me say, scornfully; and I have told you, in some of my teaching in *Aratra Pentelici*, that all great art must be popular.[2] Yes, but great art is popular, as bread and water are to children fed by a father. And vile art is popular, as poisonous jelly is, to children cheated by a confectioner. And it is quite possible to make any kind of art popular on those last terms. The colour school may become just as poisonous as the colourless, in the hands of fools, or of rogues. Here is a book I bought only the other day,—one of the things got up cheap to catch the eyes of mothers at bookstalls,—*Puss in Boots*, illustrated; a most definite work of the colour school—red jackets and white paws and yellow coaches as distinct as Giotto or Raphael would have kept them. But the thing is done by fools for money, and becomes entirely monstrous and abominable. Here, again, is colour art produced by fools

[1] [The Bible references here are to Matthew x. 38, xvi. 24; xiv. 31; and Colossians ii. 14. On the meaning of "taking up one's cross," see *Ethics of the Dust*, §§ 79, 80 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 300–302).]

[2] [See § 141; Vol. XX. p. 298.]

for religion: here is Indian sacred painting,—a black god with a hundred arms, with a green god on one side of him and a red god on the other;[1] still a most definite work of the colour school. Giotto or Raphael could not have made the black more resolutely black (though the whole colour of the school of Athens is kept in distinct separation from one black square in it), nor the green more unquestionably green. Yet the whole is pestilent and loathsome.

31. Now but one point more, and I have done with this subject for to-day.

You must not think that this manifest brilliancy and Harlequin's-jacket character is essential in the colour school. The essential matter is only that everything should be of *its own* definite colour: it may be altogether sober and dark, yet the distinctness of hue preserved with entire fidelity. Here, for instance, is a picture of Hogarth's,—one of quite the most precious things we have in our galleries.[2] It represents a meeting of some learned society—gentlemen of the last century, very gravely dressed, but who, nevertheless, as gentlemen pleasantly did in that day,—you remember Goldsmith's weakness on the point[3]—wear coats of tints of dark red, blue, or violet. There are some thirty gentlemen in the room, and perhaps seven or eight different tints of subdued claret-colour in their coats; and yet every coat is kept so distinctly of its own proper claret-colour, that each gentleman's servant would know his master's.

Yet the whole canvas is so grey and quiet, that as I now hold it by this Dutch landscape, with the vermilion jacket, you would fancy Hogarth's had no colour in it at all, and that the Dutchman was half-way to becoming a Titian; whereas Hogarth's is a consummate piece of the most perfect colourist school, which Titian could not beat,

[1] [This example is not in the Oxford Collection.]

[2] ["A Society of Artists." No. 72 in the *Catalogue of Paintings exhibited in the University Galleries, Oxford* (1891).]

[3] ["His education seemed to have fitted him for nothing but to dress himself in gaudy colours, of which he was as fond as a magpie. . . . He applied for ordination; but, as he applied in scarlet clothes, he was speedily turned out of the episcopal palace" (Macaulay's Essay).]

in its way; and the Dutchman could no more paint half an inch of it than he could summon a rainbow into the clouds.

32. Here then, you see, are, altogether, five works, all of the absolutely pure colour school:—

1. One, Indian,—Religious Art;
2. One, Florentine,—Religious Art;
3. One, English,—from Painted Chamber, Westminster, —Ethic Art;
4. One, English,—Hogarth,—Naturalistic Art;
5. One, English,—to-day sold in the High Street,— Caricaturist Art.

And of these, the Florentine and old English are divine work, God-inspired; full, indeed, of faults and innocencies, but divine, as good children are.

Then this by Hogarth is entirely wise and right; but worldly-wise, not divine.

While the old Indian, and this, with which we feed our children at this hour, are entirely damnable art;—every bit of it done by the direct inspiration of the devil,—feeble, ridiculous,—yet mortally poisonous to every noble quality in body and soul.

33. I have now, I hope, guarded you sufficiently from the danger either of confusing the inferior school of chiaroscuro with that of colour, or of imagining that a work must necessarily be good, on the sole ground of its belonging to the higher group. I can now proceed securely to separate the third school, that of Delineation, from both; and to examine its special qualities.

It begins (see "Inaugural Lectures," § 137[1]) in the primitive work of races insensible alike to shade and to colour, and nearly devoid of thought and of sentiment, but gradually developing into both.

Now as the design is primitive, so are the means likely to be primitive. A line is the simplest work of art you

[1] [Vol. XX. p. 125.]

can produce. What are the simplest means you can produce it with?

A Cumberland lead pencil is a work of art in itself, quite a nineteenth-century machine. Pen and ink are complex and scholarly; and even chalk or charcoal not always handy.

But the primitive line, the first and last, generally the best of lines, is that which you have elementary faculty of at your fingers' ends, and which kittens can draw as well as you—the scratch.

The first, I say, and the last of lines. Permanent exceedingly,—even in flesh, or on mahogany tables, often more permanent than we desire. But when studiously and honourably made, divinely permanent, or delightfully—as on the venerable desks of our public schools, most of them, now, specimens of wood engraving dear to the heart of England.

84. Engraving, then, is, in brief terms, the Art of Scratch. It is essentially the cutting into a solid substance for the sake of making your ideas as permanent as possible, graven with an iron pen in the Rock for ever.[1] *Permanence*, you observe, is the object, not multiplicability;—that is quite an accidental, sometimes not even a desirable, attribute of engraving. Duration of your work —fame, and undeceived vision of all men, on the pane of glass of the window on a wet day, or on the pillars of the Castle of Chillon,[2] or on the walls of the pyramids;—a primitive art,—yet first and last with us.

Since then engraving, we say, is essentially cutting into the surface of any solid; as the primitive design is in lines or dots, the primitive cutting of such design is a scratch or a hole; and scratchable solids being essentially three—stone, wood, metal,—we shall have three great schools of engraving to investigate in each material.

[1] [Job xix. 24; quoted also in *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 51 (Vol. XIX. p. 100).]

[2] [As, for instance, Shenstone's scratching of the lines ending "His warmest welcome at an inn" on the parlour window at the Red Lion, Henley; and the names of Shelley, Dickens, and other famous persons (that of Byron is a forgery), on the pillars of the Castle of Chillon.]

35. On tablet of stone, on tablet of wood, on tablet of steel,—the first giving the law to everything; the second true Athenian, like Athena's first statue in olive-wood, making the law legible and homely; and the third true Vulcanian, having the splendour and power of accomplished labour.

Now of stone engraving, which is joined inseparably with sculpture and architecture, I am not going to speak at length in this course of lectures. I shall speak only of wood and metal engraving. But there is one circumstance in stone engraving which it is necessary to observe in connection with the other two branches of the art.

The great difficulty for a primitive engraver is to make his scratch deep enough to be visible. Visibility is quite as essential to your fame as permanence; and if you have only your furrow to depend on, the engraved tablet, at certain times of day, will be illegible, and passed without notice.

But suppose you fill in your furrow with something black, then it will be legible enough at once; and if the black fall out or wash out, still your furrow is there, and may be filled again by anybody.

Therefore, the noble stone engravers, using marble to receive their furrow, fill that furrow with marble ink.

And you have an engraved plate to purpose;—with the whole sky for its margin! Look here—the front of the church of San Michele of Lucca,—white marble with green serpentine for ink; or here,—the steps of the Giant's Stair, with lead for ink; or here,—the floor of the Pisan Duomo, with porphyry for ink.[1] Such cutting, filled in with colour or with black, branches into all sorts of developments,—

[1] [Here Ruskin showed no doubt one of his drawings of San Michele (Nos. 83, 84, or 85 in the Educational Series). No. 83 is engraved in *Stones of Venice* (Vol. IX. p. 432), and No. 85 is given in Vol. IV. p. xxviii. Of the Giant's Stair in the Ducal Palace there is no separate drawing in the Oxford collections, though No. 64 in the Reference Series partly shows it, and, when exhibited by Ruskin at his Verona lecture (Vol. XIX. p. 457), was described as "Interior Court of the Ducal Palace, with Giant's Stair." The drawing is given in Vol. IV. p. 40. No. 94 in the same series may be a piece of the floor of the Pisan Duomo.]

Florentine mosaic on the one hand, niello on the other, and infinite minor arts.

36. Yet we must not make this filling with colour part of our definition of engraving. To engrave is, in final strictness, "to decorate a surface with furrows." (Cameos, in accuratest terms, are minute sculptures, not engravings.) A ploughed field is the purest type of such art; and is, on hilly land, an exquisite piece of decoration.

Therefore it will follow that engraving distinguishes itself from ordinary drawing by greater need of muscular effort.

The quality of a pen drawing is to be produced easily, —deliberately, always,* but with a point that *glides* over the paper. Engraving, on the contrary, requires always force, and its virtue is that of a line produced by pressure, or by blows of a chisel.

It involves, therefore, always, ideas of power and dexterity, but also of restraint; and the delight you take in it should involve the understanding of the difficulty the workman dealt with. You perhaps doubt the extent to which this feeling justly extends (in the first volume of *Modern Painters*, expressed under the head "Ideas of Power"[1]). But why is a large stone in any building grander than a small one? Simply because it was more difficult to raise it. So, also, an engraved line is, and ought to be, recognized as more grand than a pen or pencil line, because it was more difficult to execute it.

In this mosaic of Lucca front you forgive much, and admire much, because you see it is all cut in stone. So, in wood and steel, you ought to see that every line has been costly; but observe, costly of deliberative, no less than athletic or executive power. The main use of the restraint which makes the line difficult to draw, is to give

* Compare "Inaugural Lectures," § 144 [Vol. XX. p. 135].

[1] [See in this edition Vol. III. pp. 116 *seq.*]

time and motive for deliberation in drawing it, and to ensure its being the best in your power.

87. For, as with deliberation, so without repentance, your engraved line must be. It may, indeed, be burnished or beaten out again in metal, or patched and botched in stone; but always to disadvantage, and at pains which must not be incurred often. And there is a singular evidence in one of Dürer's finest plates that, in his time, or at least in his manner of work, it was not possible at all. Among the disputes as to the meaning of Dürer's Knight and Death,[1] you will find it sometimes suggested, or insisted, that the horse's raised foot is going to fall into a snare. What has been fancied a noose is only the former outline of the horse's foot and limb, uneffaced.

The engraved line is therefore to be conclusive; not experimental. "I have determined this," says the engraver. Much excellent pen drawing is excellent in being tentative, —in being experimental. Indeterminate, not through want of meaning, but through fulness of it—halting *wisely* between two opinions—feeling cautiously after clearer opinions. But your engraver has made up his opinion. This is so, and must for ever be so, he tells you. A very proper thing for a thoughtful man to say; a very improper and impertinent thing for a foolish one to say. Foolish engraving is consummately foolish work. Look,—all the world,—look for evermore, says the foolish engraver; see what a fool I have been! How many lines I have laid for nothing! How many lines upon lines, with no precept, much less super-precept![2]

88. Here, then, are two definite ethical characters in all engraved work. It is Athletic; and it is Resolute. Add one more; that it is obedient;—in their infancy the nurse, but in their youth the slave, of the higher arts; servile,

[1] [For this plate see Vol. VII. p. 310. The reference is to the raised hind-leg; it may be pointed out that at the extreme edge of the plate, similar corrections may be noticed in the case of the other leg.]

[2] [On this aspect of the engraver's work, compare *Cestus of Aglaia* (Vol. XIX. pp. 100 *seq.*).]

both in the mechanism and labour of it, and in its function of interpreting the schools of painting as superior to itself.

And this relation to the higher arts we will study at the source of chief power in all the normal skill of Christendom, Florence; and chiefly, as I said, in the work of one Florentine master, Sandro Botticelli.

## LECTURE II

### THE RELATION OF ENGRAVING TO OTHER ARTS IN FLORENCE

89. From what was laid before you in my last lecture, you must now be aware that I do not mean, by the word "engraving," merely the separate art of producing plates from which black pictures may be printed.

I mean, by engraving, the art of producing decoration on a surface by the touches of a chisel or a burin; and I mean by its relation to other arts, the subordinate service of this linear work, in sculpture, in metal work, and in painting; or in the representation and repetition of painting.

And first, therefore, I have to map out the broad relations of the arts of sculpture, metal work, and painting, in Florence, among themselves, during the period in which the art of engraving was distinctly connected with them.*

40. You will find, or may remember, that in my lecture on Michael Angelo and Tintoret[1] I indicated the singular importance, in the history of art, of a space of forty years, between 1480, and the year in which Raphael died, 1520. Within that space of time the change was completed, from the principles of ancient, to those of existing, art;—a manifold change, not definable in brief terms, but most clearly characterized, and easily remembered, as the change of conscientious and didactic art, into that which proposes to itself no duty beyond technical skill, and no object but the pleasure of the beholder. Of that momentous change itself I do not purpose to speak in the present course of lectures;

* Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 154 [Vol. XX. p. 308].

[1] [See above, p. 82.]

but my endeavour will be to lay before you a rough chart of the course of the arts in Florence up to the time when it took place; a chart indicating for you, definitely, the growth of conscience, in work which is distinctively conscientious, and the perfecting of expression and means of popular address, in that which is distinctively didactic.

41. Means of popular address, observe, which have become singularly important to us at this day. Nevertheless, remember that the power of printing, or reprinting, black *pictures*,—practically contemporary with that of reprinting black *letters*,—modified the art of the draughtsman only as it modified that of the scribe. Beautiful and unique writing, as beautiful and unique painting or engraving, remain exactly what they were; but other useful and reproductive methods of both have been superadded. Of these, it is acutely said by Dr. Alfred Woltmann,*—

"A far more important part is played in the art-life of Germany by the technical arts for the *multiplying* of works; for Germany, while it was the land of book-printing, is also the land of picture-printing. Indeed, wood-engraving, which preceded the invention of book-printing, *prepared the way for it, and only left one step more necessary for it. Book-printing* and *picture-printing* have both the same inner cause for their origin, namely, the impulse to make each mental gain a common blessing. Not merely princes and rich nobles were to have the privilege of adorning their private chapels and apartments with beautiful religious pictures; the poorest man was also to have his delight in that which the artist had devised and produced. It was not sufficient for him when it stood in the church as an altar-shrine, visible to him and to the congregation from afar; he desired to have it as his own, to carry it about with him, to bring it into his own home. The grand importance of wood-engraving and copperplate is not sufficiently estimated in historical investigations. They were not alone of use in the advance of art; they form an epoch in the entire life of mind and culture. The idea embodied and multiplied in pictures became like that embodied in the printed word, the herald of every intellectual movement, and conquered the world."

42. "Conquered the world"? The rest of the sentence is true, but this, hyperbolic, and greatly false. It should have been said that both painting and engraving have

* *Holbein and his Time*, 4to, Bentley, 1872 (a very valuable book), p. 17. Italics mine.

conquered much of the good in the world, and, hitherto, little or none of the evil.

Nor do I hold it usually an advantage to art, in teaching, that it *should* be common, or constantly seen. In becoming intelligibly and kindly beautiful, while it remains solitary and unrivalled, it has a greater power. Westminster Abbey is more didactic to the English nation than a million of popular illustrated treatises on architecture.

Nay, even that it cannot be understood but with some difficulty, and must be sought before it can be seen, is no harm. The noblest didactic art is, as it were, set on a hill, and its disciples come to it. The vilest destructive and corrosive art stands at the street corners, crying, "Turn in hither; come, eat of my bread, and drink of my wine, which I have mingled."[1]

And Dr. Woltmann has allowed himself too easily to fall into the common notion of Liberalism, that bad art, disseminated, is instructive, and good art isolated, not so. The question is, first, I assure you, whether what art you have got is good or bad. If essentially bad, the more you see of it, the worse for you. Entirely popular art is all that is noble, in the cathedral, the council chamber, and the market-place; not the paltry coloured print pinned on the wall of a private room.

43. I despise the poor!—do I, think you? Not so. They only despise the poor who think them better off with police news, and coloured tracts of the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, than they were with Luini painting on their church walls, and Donatello carving the pillars of their market-places.

Nevertheless, the effort to be universally, instead of locally, didactic, modified advantageously, as you know, and in a thousand ways varied, the earlier art of engraving: and the development of its popular power, whether for good or evil, came exactly—so fate appointed—at a time

[1] [Proverbs ix. 4, 5.]

when the minds of the masses were agitated by the struggle which closed in the Reformation in some countries, and in the desperate refusal of Reformation in others.* The two greatest masters of engraving whose lives we are to study, were, both of them, passionate reformers: Holbein no less than Luther; Botticelli no less than Savonarola.

44. Reformers, I mean, in the full and, accurately, the only, sense. Not preachers of new doctrines; but witnesses against the betrayal of the old ones, which were on the lips of all men, and in the lives of none. Nay, the painters are indeed more pure reformers than the priests. They rebuked the manifest vices of men, while they realized whatever was loveliest in their faith. Priestly reform soon enraged itself into mere contest for personal opinions; while, without rage, but in stern rebuke of all that was vile in conduct or thought,—in declaration of the always-received faiths of the Christian Church, and in warning of the power of faith, and death,† over the petty designs of men,—Botticelli and Holbein together fought foremost in the ranks of the Reformation.

45. To-day I will endeavour to explain how they attained such rank. Then, in the next two lectures, the technics of both,—their way of speaking; and in the last two, what they had got to say.

First, then, we ask how they attained this rank;—who taught *them* what they were finally best to teach? How far must every people—how far did this Florentine people —teach its masters, before *they* could teach *it?*

Even in these days, when every man is, by hypothesis, as good as another, does not the question sound strange to you? You recognize in the past, as you think, clearly, that national advance takes place always under the guidance

* See Carlyle, *Frederick*, Book III., chap. viii.

† I believe I am taking too much trouble in writing these lectures. This sentence, § 44, has cost me, I suppose, first and last, about as many hours as there are lines in it;—and my choice of these two words, faith and death, as representatives of power, will perhaps, after all, only puzzle the reader.

of masters, or groups of masters, possessed of what appears to be some new personal sensibility or gift of invention; and we are apt to be reverent to these alone, as if the nation itself had been unprogressive, and suddenly awakened, or converted, by the genius of one man.

No idea can be more superficial.[1] Every nation must teach its tutors, and prepare itself to receive them; but the fact on which our impression is founded—the rising, apparently by chance, of men whose singular gifts suddenly melt the multitude, already at the point of fusion; or suddenly form, and *in*form, the multitude which has gained coherence enough to be capable of formation,—enables us to measure and map the gain of national intellectual territory, by tracing first the lifting of the mountain chains of its genius.

46. I have told you that we have nothing to do at present with the great transition from ancient to modern habits of thought which took place at the beginning of the sixteenth century. I only want to go as far as that point;—where we shall find the old superstitious art represented *finally* by Perugino, and the modern scientific and anatomical art represented *primarily* by Michael Angelo. And the epithet bestowed on Perugino by Michael Angelo, "goffo nell' arte," dunce, or blockhead, in art,[2]—being, as far as my knowledge of history extends, the most cruel, the most false, and the most foolish insult ever offered by one great man to another,—does you at least good service, in showing how trenchant the separation is between the two orders of artists,*—how exclusively we may follow out the

* He is said by Vasari to have called Francia the like.[3] Francia is a child compared to Perugino; but a finished working-goldsmith and ornamental painter nevertheless; and one of the very last men to be called "goffo," except by unparalleled insolence.

[1] [Compare on this point the lecture on Cimabue in *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence* (Vol. XXIII.).]

[2] [See the Life of Perugino in Vasari's *Lives of the Artists*, vol. ii. p. 321 (Bohn's translation). Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 10 (Vol. XXIII. p. 16).]

[3] [See the Life of Michael Angelo in Vasari, vol. v. p. 253 (Bohn). For Ruskin's numerous references to Francia, see General Index.]

history of all the "goffi nell' arte," and write our Florentine *Dunciad*, and *Laus Stultitiæ*,[1] in peace; and never trench upon the thoughts or ways of these proud ones, who showed their fathers' nakedness, and snatched their masters' fame.

47. The Florentine dunces in art are a multitude; but I only want you to know something about twenty of them.

Twenty!—you think that a grievous number? It may, perhaps, appease you a little to be told that when you really have learned a very little, accurately, about these twenty dunces, there are only five more men among the artists of Christendom whose works I shall ask you to examine while you are under my care. That makes twenty-five altogether,—an exorbitant demand on your attention, you still think? And yet, but a little while ago, you were all agog to get me to go and look at Mrs. A's sketches, and tell you what was to be thought about *them;* and I've had the greatest difficulty to keep Mrs. B's photographs from being shown side by side with the Raphael drawings in the University galleries. And you will waste any quantity of time in looking at Mrs. A's sketches or Mrs. B's photographs; and yet you look grave, because, out of nineteen centuries of European art-labour and thought, I ask you to learn something seriously about the works of five-and-twenty men!

48. It is hard upon you, doubtless, considering the quantity of time you must nowadays spend in trying which can hit balls farthest. So I will put the task into the simplest form I can.

Here are the names of the twenty-five men,* and opposite each, a line indicating the length of his life, and the position of it in his century. The diagram still, however,

* The diagram used at the lecture is engraved on the opposite leaf [Fig. 2]; the reader had better draw it larger for himself, as it had to be made inconveniently small for this size of leaf.

[1] [Pope's *Dunciad* was greatly admired by Ruskin: see Vol. XX. p. 77. Erasmus's *Laus Stultitiæ* was illustrated by Holbein.]

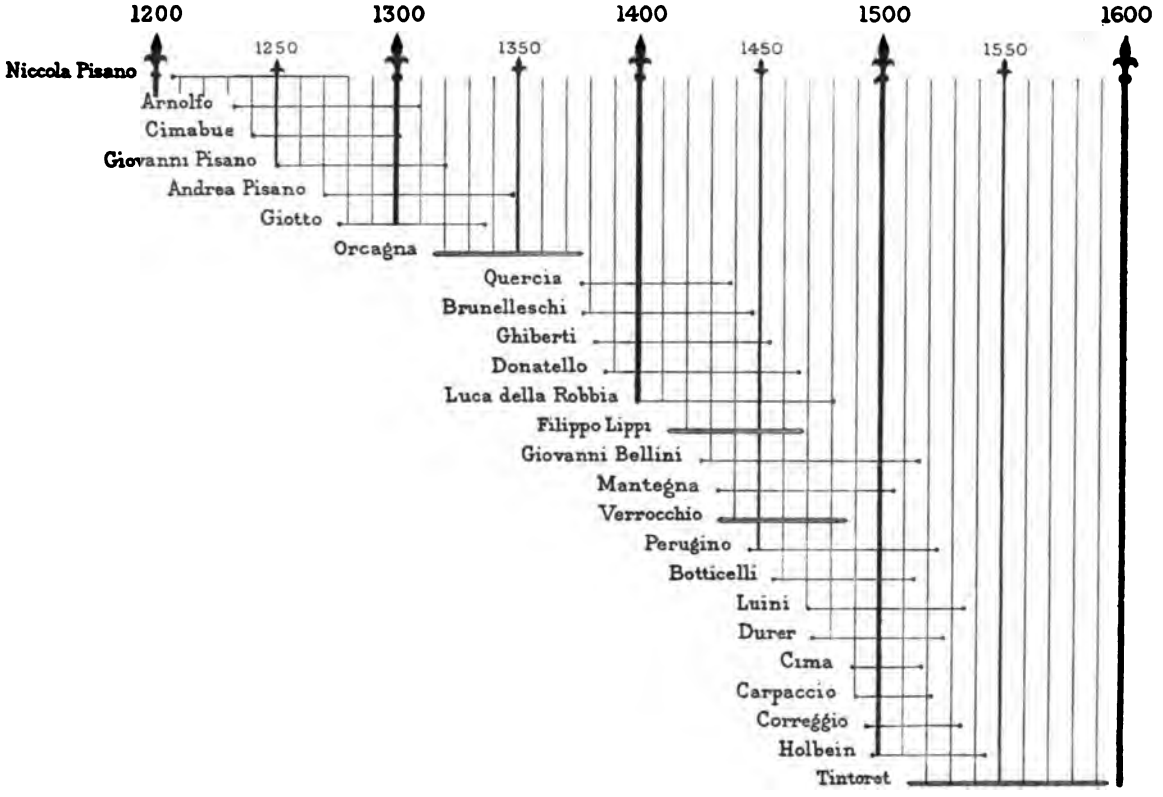

1200
1300
1400
1500
1600
1250
1350
1450
1550
Niccola Pisano
Arnolfo
Cimabue
Giovanni Pisano
Andrea Pisano
Giotto
Orcagna
Quercia
Brunelleschi
Ghiberti
Donatello
Luca della Robbia
Filippo Lippi
Giovanni Bellini
Mantegna
Verrocchio
Perugino
Botticelli
Luini
Durer
Cima
Carpaccio
Correggio
Holbein
Tintoret

*Fig.* 2

needs a few words of explanation. Very chiefly, for those who know anything of my writings, there is needed explanation of its not including the names of Titian, Reynolds, Velasquez, Turner, and other such men, always reverently put before you at other times.

They are absent, because I have no fear of your not looking at these. All your lives through, if you care about art, you will be looking at them. But while you are here at Oxford, I want to make you learn what you should know of these earlier, many of them weaker, men, who yet, for the very reason of their greater simplicity of power, are better guides for you, and of whom some will remain guides to all generations. And, as regards the subject of our present course, I have a still more weighty reason;—Vandyke, Gainsborough,[1] Titian, Reynolds, Velasquez, and the rest, are essentially portrait painters. They give you the likeness of a man: they have nothing to say either about his future life, or his gods. "That is the look of him," they say: "here, on earth, we know no more."

49. But these, whose names I have engraved, have something to say—generally much,—either about the future life of man, or about his gods. They are therefore, literally, seers or prophets. False prophets, it may be, or foolish ones; of that you must judge; but you must read before you can judge; and read (or hear) them consistently; for you don't know them till you have heard them out. But with Sir Joshua, or Titian, one portrait is as another: it is here a pretty lady, there a great lord; but speechless, all;—whereas, with these twenty-five men, each picture or statue is not merely another person of a pleasant society, but another chapter of a Sibylline book.

50. For this reason, then, I do not want Sir Joshua or Velasquez in my defined group; and for my present purpose, I can spare from it even four others:—namely, three who have *too* special gifts, and must each be separately studied

[1] [With this reference to Gainsborough compare Vol. XIV. p. 223. For Reynolds in this connexion, see Vol. VII. p. 378.]

—Correggio, Carpaccio, Tintoret;—and one who has no special gift, but a balanced group of many—Cima. This leaves twenty-one for classification, of whom I will ask you to lay hold thus. You must continually have felt the difficulty caused by the names of centuries not tallying with their years;—the year 1201 being the first of the thirteenth century, and so on. I am always plagued by it myself, much as I have to think and write with reference to chronology; and I mean for the future, in our art chronology, to use as far as possible a different form of notation.

51. In my diagram the vertical lines are the divisions of tens of years; the thick black lines divide the centuries. The horizontal lines, then, at a glance, tell you the length and date of each artist's life. In one or two instances I cannot find the date of birth; in one or two more, of death; and the line indicates then only the ascertained * period during which the artist worked.

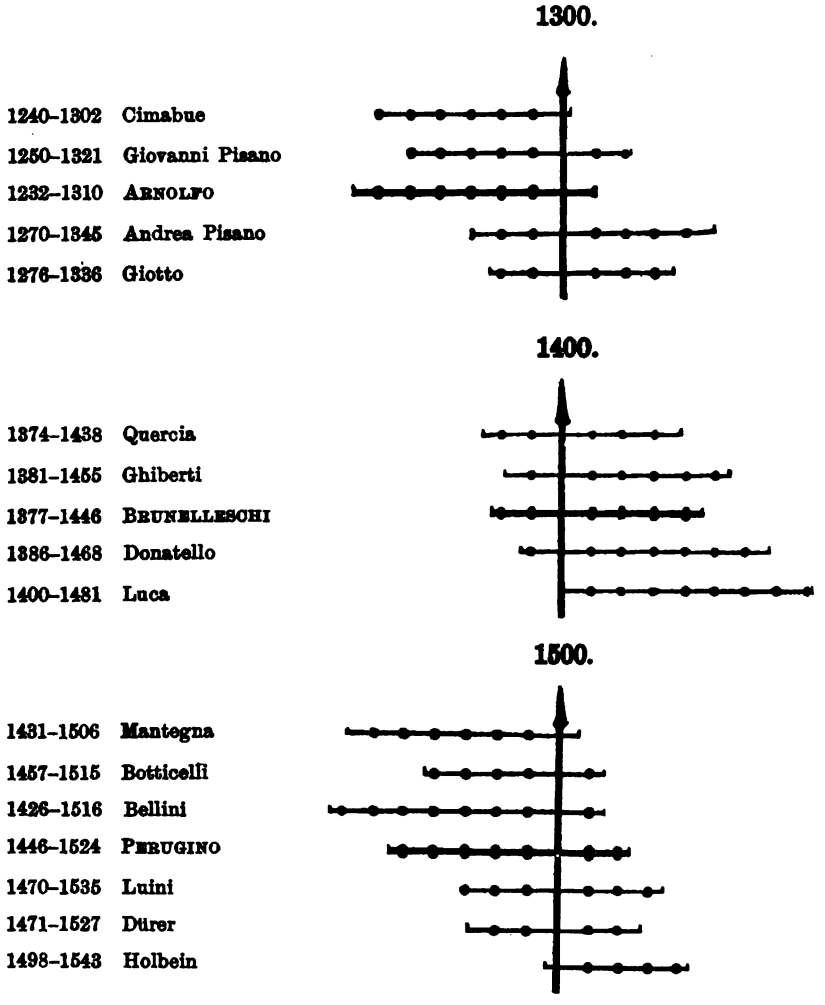
And, thus represented, you see nearly all their lives run through the year of a new century; so that if the lines representing them were needles, and the black bars of the years 1300, 1400, 1500 were magnets, I could take up nearly all the needles by lifting the bars.

52. I will actually do this, then, in three other simple diagrams.[1] I place a rod for the year 1300 over the lines of life, and I take up all it touches. I have to drop Niccola Pisano, but I catch five. Now, with my rod of 1400, I have dropped Orcagna indeed, but I again catch five. Now, with my rod of 1500, I indeed drop Filippo Lippi and Verrocchio, but I catch seven. And here I have three pennons, with the staves of the years 1300, 1400, and 1500 running through them,—holding the names of nearly all

* "Ascertained," scarcely any date ever is, quite satisfactorily. The diagram only represents what is practically and broadly true. I may have to modify it greatly in detail.

[1] [For other references to these chronological charts, see *Val d'Arno*, §§ 176, 272.]

the men I want you to study in easily remembered groups of five, five, and seven. And these three groups I shall hereafter call the 1300 group, 1400 group, and 1500 group.




58. But why should four unfortunate masters be dropped out?

Well, I want to drop them out, at any rate; but not in disrespect. In hope, on the contrary, to make you

remember them very separately indeed;—for this following reason.

We are in the careless habit of speaking of men who form a great number of pupils, and have a host of inferior satellites round them, as masters of great schools.

But before you call a man a master, you should ask, Are his pupils greater or less than himself? If they are greater than himself, he is a master indeed;—he has been a true teacher.[1] But if all his pupils are less than himself, he may have been a great *man*, but in all probability has been a bad *master*, or no master.

Now these men, whom I have signally left out of my groups, are true *Masters*.

Niccola Pisano taught all Italy;[2] but chiefly his own son, who succeeded, and in some things very much surpassed him.

Orcagna taught all Italy, after him, down to Michael Angelo. And these two—Lippi, the religious schools, Verrocchio, the artist schools, of their century.

Lippi taught Sandro Botticelli; and Verrocchio taught Leonardo da Vinci, Lorenzo di Credi, and Perugino. Have I not good reason to separate the masters of such pupils from the schools they created?

54. But how is it that I can drop just the cards I want out of my pack?

Well, certainly I force and fit matters a little: I leave some men out of my list whom I should like to have in it;—Benozzo Gozzoli, for instance, and Mino da Fiesole; but I can do without them, and so can you also, for the present. I catch Luca by a hair's-breadth only, with my 1400 rod; but on the whole, with very little coaxing, I get the groups in this memorable and quite literally "handy" form. For see, I write my lists of five, five, and seven, on bits of pasteboard; I hinge my rods to these; and you can

[1] [Compare what Mrs. Browning says of the relation of Cimabue to Giotto in the lines quoted by Ruskin in Vol. XIV. p. 33.]

[2] [See *Val d'Arno*, passim.]

brandish the school of 1400 in your left hand, and of 1500 in your right, like—railway signals;—and I wish all railway signals were as clear. Once learn, thoroughly, the groups in this artificially contracted form, and you can refine and complete afterwards at your leisure.

55. And thus actually flourishing my two pennons, and getting my grip of the men, in either hand, I find a notable thing concerning my two flags. The men whose names I hold in my left hand are all sculptors; the men whose names I hold in my right are all painters.

You will infallibly suspect me of having chosen them thus on purpose. No, honour bright!—I chose simply the greatest men,—those I wanted to talk to you about. I arranged them by their dates; I put them into three conclusive pennons; and behold what follows!

56. Farther, note this: in the 1800 group, four out of the five men are architects as well as sculptors and painters. In the 1400 group, there is one architect; in the 1500, none. And the meaning of that is, that in 1800 the arts were all united, and duly led by architecture; in 1400, sculpture began to assume too separate a power to herself; in 1500, painting arrogated all, and, at last, betrayed all. From which, with much other collateral evidence, you may justly conclude that the three arts ought to be practised together, and that they naturally are so. I long since asserted that no man could be an architect who was not a sculptor.[1] As I learned more and more of my business, I perceived also that no man could be a sculptor who was not an architect;—that is to say, who had not knowledge enough, and pleasure enough in structural law, to be able to build, on occasion, better than a mere builder. And so, finally, I now positively aver to you that nobody, in the graphic arts, can be quite rightly a master of anything, who is not master of everything!

57. The junction of the three arts in men's minds, at

[1] [In *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (1854): see Vol. XII. pp. 84, 85. Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 22 (Vol. XXIII. p. 21).]

the best times, is shortly signified in these words of Chaucer. Love's Garden,

> "Everidele
> Enclosed was, and walled well
> With high walls, embatailled,
> Portrayed without, and well entayled
> With many rich portraitures."[1]

The French original is better still, and gives four arts in unison:—

> "Quant suis avant un pou alé
> Et vy un vergier grant et le,
> Bien cloz de bon mur batillié
> Pourtrait dehors, et entaillié
> Ou (for au) maintes riches escriptures."

Read also carefully the description of the temples of Mars and Venus in the "Knight's Tale."[2] Contemporary French uses "entaille" even of solid sculpture and of the living form; and Pygmalion, as a perfect master, professes wood carving, ivory carving, wax-work, and iron-work, no less than stone sculpture:—

> "Pimalion, uns entaillieres
> Pourtraians en fuz * et en pierres,
> En mettaux, en os, et en cire,
> Et en toute autre matire."[3]

58. I made a little sketch, when last in Florence,[4] of a subject which will fix the idea of this unity of the arts in your minds. At the base of the tower of Giotto are two rows of hexagonal panels, filled with bas-reliefs. Some of these are by unknown hands,—some by Andrea Pisano,

* For fust, log of wood, erroneously "fer" in the later printed editions. Compare the account of the works of Art and Nature, towards the end of the *Romance of the Rose*.

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[1] [*The Romaunt of the Rose*, 137–140.]
[2] [Ruskin quotes the description in Vol. VIII. p. 269.]
[3] [*Le Roman de la Rose*, lines 21638 *seq.*]
[4] [In June 1872; the sketch is at Brantwood. The panel is mentioned in *Mornings in Florence*, §§ 139, 140, 142, 145, and a photogravure of it is now given in Vol. XXIII.]

some by Luca della Robbia, two by Giotto himself; of these I sketched the panel representing the art of Painting.

You have in that bas-relief one of the foundation-stones of the most perfectly built tower in Europe;[1] you have that stone carved by its architect's own hand; you find, further, that this architect and sculptor was the greatest painter of his time, and the friend of the greatest poet; and you have represented by him a painter in his shop,—bottega,—as symbolic of the entire art of painting.

59. In which representation, please note how carefully Giotto shows you the tabernacles or niches, in which the paintings are to be placed. Not independent of their frames, these panels of his, you see!

Have you ever considered, in the early history of painting, how important also is the history of the frame maker? It is a matter, I assure you, needing your very best consideration. For the frame was made before the picture. The painted window is much, but the aperture it fills was thought of before it. The fresco by Giotto is much, but the vault it adorns was planned first. Who thought of these;—who built?

Questions taking us far back before the birth of the shepherd boy of Fésole,—questions not to be answered by history of painting only, still less of painting in *Italy* only.

60. And in pointing out to you this fact, I may once for all prove to you the essential unity of the arts, and show you how impossible it is to understand one without reference to another. Which I wish you to observe all the more closely, that you may use, without danger of being misled, the data, of unequalled value, which have been collected by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in the book which they have called a *History of Painting in Italy*,[2] but which is in fact only a dictionary of details relating to that history. Such a title is an absurdity on the face of it. For, first,

[1] [Compare Vol. VII. p. 357 *n.*; Vol. VIII. p. 189.]

[2] [*A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, by J. A. Crowe and G. B. Cavalcaselle, 3 vols., 1864; followed in 1871 by *A History of Painting in North Italy*, 2 vols.]

you can no more write the history of painting in Italy than you can write the history of the south wind in Italy. The sirocco does indeed produce certain effects at Genoa, and others at Rome; but what would be the value of a treatise upon the winds, which, for the honour of any country, assumed that every city of it had a native sirocco?

But, further,—imagine what success would attend the meteorologist who should set himself to give an account of the south wind, but take no notice of the north!

And, finally, suppose an attempt to give you an account of either wind, but none of the seas, or mountain passes, by which they were nourished, or directed.

61. For instance, I am in this course of lectures to give you an account of a single and minor branch of graphic art,—engraving. But observe how many references to local circumstances it involves. There are three materials for it, we said;—stone, wood, and metal. Stone engraving is the art of countries possessing marble and gems; wood engraving, of countries overgrown with forest; metal engraving, of countries possessing treasures of silver and gold. And the style of a stone engraver is formed on pillars and pyramids; the style of a wood engraver under the eaves of larch cottages; the style of a metal engraver in the treasuries of kings. Do you suppose I could rightly explain to you the value of a single touch on brass by Finiguerra,[1] or on box by Bewick, unless I had grasp of the great laws of climate and country; and could trace the inherited sirocco or tramontana of thought to which the souls and bodies of the men owed their existence?

62. You see that in this flag of 1300 there is a dark strong line in the centre, against which you read the name of Arnolfo.[2]

In writing our Florentine Dunciad, or History of Fools, can we possibly begin with a better day than All Fools'

[1] [See Vol. XV. p. 380, and Vol. XX. p. 335 *n.*]

[2] [Ruskin made Arnolfo the subject of his first lecture on *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence.*]

Day? On All Fools' Day—the first, if you like better so to call it, of the month of *opening*,—in the year 1300, is signed the document making Arnolfo a citizen of Florence, and in 1310 he dies, chief master of the works of the cathedral there. To this man, Crowe and Cavalcaselle give half a page, out of three volumes of five hundred pages each.[1]

But lower down in my flag, (not put there because of any inferiority, but by order of chronology,) you will see a name sufficiently familiar to you—that of Giotto; and to him, our historians of painting in Italy give some hundred pages, under the impression, stated by them at page 248 of their [first] volume, that "in his hands, art in the Peninsula became entitled for the first time to the name of Italian."

68. Art became Italian! Yes, but *what* art? Your authors give a perspective—or what they call such,—of the upper church of Assisi, as if that were merely an accidental occurrence of blind walls for Giotto to paint on!

But how came the upper church of Assisi there? How came it to be vaulted—to be aisled? How came Giotto to be asked to paint upon it?

The art that built it, good or bad, must have been an Italian one, before Giotto. He could not have painted on the air. Let us see how his panels were made for him.

64. This Captain—the centre of our first group—Arnolfo, has always hitherto been called "Arnolfo di Lapo";—Arnolfo the son of Lapo.

Modern investigators come down on us delightedly, to tell us—Arnolfo was *not* the son of Lapo.

In these days you will have half-a-dozen doctors, writing each a long book, and the sense of all will be,—Arnolfo wasn't the son of Lapo. Much good may you get of that!

Well, you will find the fact to be, there was a great Northman builder, a true son of Thor, who came down into Italy in 1200, served the order of St. Francis there, built

[1] [*A New History of Painting in Italy*, 3 vols., 1864, vol. i. p. 138.]

Assisi, taught Arnolfo how to build, with Thor's hammer, and disappeared, leaving his name uncertain—Jacopo—Lapo—nobody knows what. Arnolfo always recognizes this man as his true father, who put the soul-life into him; he is known to his Florentines always as Lapo's Arnolfo.

That, or some likeness of that, is the vital fact. You never can get at the literal limitation of living facts. They disguise themselves by the very strength of their life: get told again and again in different ways by all manner of people;—the literalness of them is turned topsy-turvy, inside-out, over and over again;—then the fools come and read them wrong side upwards, or else, say there never was a fact at all. Nothing delights a true blockhead so much as to prove a negative;—to show that everybody has been wrong. Fancy the delicious sensation, to an empty-headed creature, of fancying for a moment that he has emptied everybody else's head as well as his own! nay, that, for once, his own hollow bottle of a head has had the best of other bottles, and has been *first* empty;—first to know—nothing.

65. Hold, then, steadily the first tradition about this Arnolfo. That his real father was called "Cambio" matters to you not a straw. That he never called himself Cambio's Arnolfo—that nobody else ever called him so, down to Vasari's time, is an infinitely significant fact to you. In my twenty-second letter in *Fors Clavigera* you will find some account of the noble habit of the Italian artists to call themselves by their masters' names, considering their master as their true father. If not the name of the master, they take that of their native place, as having owed the character or their life to that. They rarely take their own family name: sometimes it is not even known,—when best known, it is unfamiliar to us. The great Pisan artists, for instance, never bear any other name than "the Pisan"; among the other five-and-twenty names in my list, not above six, I think,—the two German, with four Italian,—are family names. Perugino (Peter of Perugia), Luini (Bernard

of Luini), Quercia (James of Quercia), Correggio (Anthony of Correggio), are named from their native places. Nobody would have understood me if I had called Giotto, "Ambrose Bondone"; or Tintoret, Robusti; or even Raphael, Sanzio. Botticelli is named from his master; Ghiberti from his father-in-law; and Ghirlandajo from his work. Orcagna, who *did*, for a wonder, name himself from his father, Andrea Cione, of Florence, has been always called "Angel" by everybody else;[1] while Arnolfo, who never named himself from his father, is now like to be fathered against his will.

But, I again beg of you, keep to the old story. For it represents, however inaccurately in detail, clearly in sum, the fact, that some great master of German Gothic at this time came down into Italy, and changed the entire form of Italian architecture by his touch. So that while Niccola and Giovanni Pisano are still virtually Greek artists, experimentally introducing Gothic forms, Arnolfo and Giotto adopt the entire Gothic ideal of form, and thenceforward use the pointed arch and steep gable as the limits of sculpture.

66. Hitherto I have been speaking of the relations of my twenty-five men to each other. But now, please note their relations altogether to the art before them. These twenty-five include, I say, all the great masters of *Christian* art.

Before them, the art was too savage to be Christian; afterwards, too carnal to be Christian.

Too savage to be Christian? I will justify that assertion hereafter;[2] but you will find that the European art of 1200

[1] ["There flourished a certain Alessandro, called after our custom Sandro, and further named Di Botticello, for a reason which we shall presently see. . . . The father turned him over in despair to a gossip of his, called Botticello, who was a goldsmith" (Vasari, Bohn's edition, vol. ii. p. 230). For Lorenzo di Cione, called Ghiberti from his father-in-law, see *ibid.*, vol. i. p. 362 *n.* "Domenico was son of Tommaso del Ghirlandajo. Tommaso was the first who invented and made those ornaments worn on the head by the young girls of Florence, and called garlands (*ghirlande*), whence Tommaso acquired the name of Ghirlandajo" (*ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 201). For Andrea di Cione, called Orcagna (so corrupted from Arcagnuolo), see Vol. XII. pp. 223–224.]

[2] [See *Val d'Arno*, § 54 (Vol. XXIII. p. 36), where this passage is referred to.]

includes all the most developed and characteristic conditions of the style in the north which you have probably been accustomed to think of as NORMAN, and which you may always most conveniently call so; and the most developed conditions of the style in the south, which, formed out of effete Greek, Persian, and Roman tradition, you may, in like manner, most conveniently express by the familiar word BYZANTINE. Whatever you call them, they are in origin adverse in temper, and remain so up to the year 1200. Then an influence appears, seemingly that of one man, Nicholas the Pisan (our first MASTER, observe), and a new spirit adopts what is best in each, and gives to what it adopts a new energy of its own; namely, this conscientious and didactic power which is the speciality of its progressive existence. And just as the new-born and natural art of Athens collects and reanimates Pelasgian and Egyptian tradition, purifying their worship, and perfecting their work, into the living heathen faith of the world, so this new-born and natural art of Florence collects and animates the Norman and Byzantine tradition, and forms out of the perfected worship and work of both, the honest Christian faith, and vital craftsmanship, of the world.

67. Get this first summary, therefore, well into your minds. The word "Norman" I use roughly for North-savage;—roughly, but advisedly.[1] I mean Lombard, Scandinavian, Frankish; everything north-savage that you can think of, except Saxon. (I have a reason for that exception; never mind it just now.*)

All north-savage I call NORMAN, all south-savage I call

* Of course it would have been impossible to express in any accurate terms, short enough for the compass of a lecture, the conditions of opposition between the Heptarchy and the Northmen;—between the Byzantine and Roman;—and between the Byzantine and Arab, which form minor, but not less trenchant, divisions of Art-province, for subsequent delineation. If you can refer to my *Stones of Venice*, see § 20 of its first chapter [Vol. IX. p. 35].

[1] [Ruskin wrote, however, here in his own copy, "Word 'Norman' used too widely and vaguely; must be corrected."]

BYZANTINE; this latter including dead native Greek primarily —then dead foreign Greek, in Rome;—then Arabian—Persian—Phœnician—Indian—all you can think of, in art of hot countries, up to this year 1200, I rank under the one term Byzantine. Now all this cold art—Norman, and all this hot art—Byzantine, is virtually dead, till 1200. It has no conscience, no didactic power;* it is devoid of both, in the sense that dreams are.

Then in the thirteenth century, men wake as if they heard an alarum through the whole vault of heaven, and true human life begins again, and the cradle of this life is the Val d'Arno. There the northern and southern nations meet; there they lay down their enmities; there they are first baptized unto John's baptism for the remission of sins;[1] there is born, and thence exiled,—thought faithless for breaking the font of baptism to save a child from drowning, in his "bel San Giovanni,"[2]—the greatest of Christian poets; he who had pity even for the lost.[3]

68. Now, therefore, my whole history of *Christian* architecture and painting begins with this Baptistery of Florence,[4] and with its associated Cathedral. Arnolfo brought the one into the form in which you now see it; he laid the foundation of the other, and that to purpose, and he is therefore the CAPTAIN of our first school.

For this Florentine Baptistery† is the great one of the

* Again much too broad a statement: not to be qualified but by a length of explanation here impossible. My lectures on Architecture, now in preparation (*Val d'Arno*), will contain further detail.

† At the side of my page, here, I find the following memorandum, which was expanded in the viva-voce lecture. The reader must make what he can of it, for I can't expand it here.

*Sense* of Italian Church plan.

Baptistery, to make Christians in; house, or dome, for them to pray and

[1] [Mark i. 4.]

[2] [So Dante calls the Baptistery of Florence (*Inferno*, xix. 17): compare Vol. XXIII. p. 62. See the *Inferno*, as cited, where Dante mentions the incident, and takes occasion to vindicate himself from the charge of impiety. The original font was afterwards destroyed, and the marbles of it were dispersed; Ruskin possessed some of them.]

[3] [On the tenderness of Dante, compare *Two Paths*, § 36 (Vol. XVI. p. 281), and Vol. XIX. p. 463.]

[4] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 24 (Vol. XX. p. 217).]

world. Here is the centre of Christian knowledge and power.

And it is one piece of large *engraving*. White substance, cut into, and filled with black, and dark green.[1]

No more perfect work was afterwards done; and I wish you to grasp the idea of this building clearly and irrevocably,—first, in order (as I told you in a previous lecture) to quit yourselves thoroughly of the idea that ornament should be decorated construction;[2] and, secondly, as the noblest type of the intaglio ornamentation, which developed itself into all minor application of black and white to engraving.

69. That it should do so first at Florence, was the natural sequence, and the just reward, of the ancient skill of Etruria in chased metal-work. The effects produced in gold, either by embossing or engraving, were the direct means of giving interest to his surfaces at the command of the "auri faber," or orfevre: and every conceivable artifice of studding, chiselling, and interlacing was exhausted by the artists in gold, who were at the head of the metal-workers, and from whom the ranks of the sculptors were reinforced.

The old French word "orfroiz," (aurifrigia,) expresses essentially what we call "frosted" work in gold; that which resembles small dew or crystals of hoar-frost; the "frigia" coming from the Latin frigus. To chase, or enchase, is not properly said of the gold; but of the jewel which it

be preached to in; bell-tower, to ring all over the town, when they were either to pray together, rejoice together, or to be warned of danger.

Harvey's picture of the Covenanters, with a shepherd on the outlook, as a campanile.[3]

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[1] [Here Ruskin showed no doubt his drawing of a portion of the exterior of the Baptistery; No. 120 in the Reference Series (Vol. XXI. p. 38).]

[2] [See *Aratra Pentelici*, §§ 23, 24 (Vol. XX. pp. 216, 217); and compare *Val d'Arno*, § 141 (Vol. XXIII. p. 86).]

[3] [Sir George Harvey (1806–1876). His picture of the Covenanters Preaching is now in the Glasgow Corporation Galleries. See, further, on the Florentine Baptistery, *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence*.]

secures with hoops or ridges (French, *en*chasser*). Then the armourer, or cup and casket maker, added to this kind of decoration that of flat inlaid enamel; and the silver-worker, finding that the raised filigree (still a staple at Genoa) only attracted tarnish, or got crushed, early sought to decorate a surface which would bear external friction, with labyrinths of safe incision.

70. Of the *security* of incision as a means of permanent decoration, as opposed to ordinary carving, here is a beautiful instance in the base of one of the external shafts of the Cathedral of Lucca;[1] thirteenth-century work, which by this time, had it been carved in relief, would have been a shapeless remnant of indecipherable bosses. But it is still as safe as if it had been cut yesterday, because the smooth round mass of the pillar is entirely undisturbed; into that, furrows are cut with a chisel as much under command and as powerful as a burin. The effect of the design is trusted entirely to the depth of these incisions—here dying out and expiring in the light of the marble, there deepened, by drill holes, into as definitely a black line as if it were drawn with ink; and describing the outline of the leafage with a delicacy of touch and of perception which no man will ever surpass, and which very few have rivalled, in the proudest days of design.

71. This security, in silver plates, was completed by filling the furrows with the black paste which at once exhibited and preserved them. The transition from that niello-work to modern engraving is one of no real moment: my object is to make you understand the qualities which constitute the *merit* of the engraving, whether charged with niello or ink. And this I hope ultimately to accomplish by studying with you some of the works of the four men, Botticelli and Mantegna in the south, Dürer and Holbein

* And "chassis," a window frame, or tracery.

[1] [See *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series, 1878*, No. 78 (Vol. XXI. p. 273); but the example is not now in the Oxford Collection. With § 70 compare § 130 *n.* (below, p. 382).]

in the north, whose names I have put in our last flag, above and beneath those of the three mighty painters, Perugino the captain, Bellini on one side—Luini on the other.

The four following lectures * will contain data necessary for such study:[1] you must wait longer before I can place before you those by which I can justify what must greatly surprise some of my audience—my having given Perugino the captain's place among the three painters.

72. But I do so, at least primarily, because what is commonly thought affected in his design is indeed the true remains of the great architectural symmetry which was soon to be lost, and which makes him the true follower of Arnolfo and Brunelleschi; and because he is a sound craftsman and workman to the very heart's core. A noble, gracious, and quiet labourer from youth to death,—never weary, never impatient, never untender, never untrue. Not Tintoret in power, not Raphael in flexibility, not Holbein in veracity, not Luini in love,—their gathered gifts he has, in balanced and fruitful measure, fit to be the guide, and impulse, and father of all.

* This present lecture does not, as at present published, justify its title; because I have not thought it necessary to write the viva-voce portions of it which amplified the 69th paragraph. I will give the substance of them in better form elsewhere; meantime the part of the lecture here given may be in its own way useful.[2]

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[1] [The works of Holbein and Botticelli are principal subjects of the following lectures, while to Dürer and Mantegna there are occasional references (see, for instance, §§ 128, 169, 247 for Dürer, and §§ 80, 156, 172 for Mantegna). For references to Perugino, see §§ 185, 206, 261, 262. Botticelli was the subject of a lecture in a later course (Vol. XXIII.); to the other artists here mentioned Ruskin did not return.]

[2] [There is no record of the viva-voce portions of the lecture, and Ruskin did not revert to the subject of engraving after *Ariadne Florentina*.]

# LECTURE III

## THE TECHNICS OF WOOD ENGRAVING

73. I AM to-day to begin to tell you what it is necessary you should observe respecting methods of manual execution in the two great arts of engraving. Only to *begin* to tell you. There need be no end of telling you such things, if you care to hear them. The theory of art is soon mastered; but "dal detto al fatto, v'è gran tratto;"[1] and as I have several times told you in former lectures,[2] every day shows me more and more the importance of the Hand.

74. Of the hand as a Servant, observe,—not of the hand as a Master. For there are two great kinds of manual work: one in which the hand is continually receiving and obeying orders; the other in which it is acting independently, or even giving orders of its own. And the dependent and submissive hand is a noble hand; but the independent or imperative hand is a vile one.

That is to say, as long as the pen, or chisel, or other graphic instrument, is moved under the direct influence of mental attention, and obeys orders of the brain, it is working nobly;—the moment it moves independently of them, and performs some habitual dexterity of its own, it is base.[3]

75. *Dexterity*—I say;—some "right-handedness" of its own. We might wisely keep that word for what the hand does at the mind's bidding; and use an opposite word—sinisterity,—for what it does at its own. For indeed we

[1] [A Tuscan proverb: "From talking to doing is a long distance."]

[2] [See, for instance, *Lectures on Art*, §§ 71, 74 (Vol. XX. pp. 77–79, 80–81); and compare *Eagle's Nest*, § 42 (above, p. 152), and Vol. III. p. 88 *n.*]

[3] [Compare *Two Paths*, §§ 42, 159, for the co-operation of mind, heart, and hand in great art (Vol. XVI. pp. 284–285, 385–386).]

want such a word in speaking of modern art; it is all full of sinisterity. Hands independent of brains;—the left hand, by division of labour, not knowing what the right does,[1] —still less what it ought to do.

76. Turning, then, to our special subject,—all engraving, I said,[2] is intaglio in the solid. But the solid, in wood engraving, is a coarse substance, easily cut; and in metal, a fine substance, not easily. Therefore, in general, you may be prepared to accept ruder and more elementary work in one than the other; and it will be the means of appeal to blunter minds.

You probably already know the difference between the actual methods of producing a printed impression from wood and metal; but I may perhaps make the matter a little more clear. In metal engraving, you cut ditches, fill them with ink, and press your paper into them. In wood engraving, you leave ridges, rub the tops of them with ink, and stamp them on your paper.

The instrument with which the substance, whether of the wood or steel, is cut away, is the same. It is a solid ploughshare, which, instead of throwing the earth aside, throws it up and out, producing at first a simple ravine, or furrow, in the wood or metal, which you can widen by another cut, or extend by successive cuts. This (Fig. 3) is the general shape of the solid ploughshare:

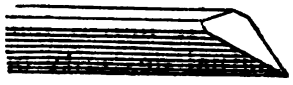

*Fig. 3*

but it is of course made sharper or blunter at pleasure. The furrow produced is at first the wedge-shaped or cuneiform ravine, already so much dwelt upon in my lectures on Greek sculpture.[3]

[1] [Matthew vi. 3.]
[2] [See above, p. 309.]
[3] [See, for instance, *Aratra Pentelici*, § 4 (Vol. XX. p. 202).]

77. Since, then, in wood printing, you print from the surface left solid; and, in metal printing, from the hollows cut into it, it follows that if you put few touches on wood, you draw, as on a slate, with white lines, leaving a quantity of black; but if you put few touches on metal, you draw with black lines, leaving a quantity of white.

Now the eye is not in the least offended by quantity of white, but is, or ought to be, greatly saddened and offended by quantity of black. Hence it follows that you must never put little work on wood. You must not sketch upon it. You may sketch on metal as much as you please.

78. "Paradox," you will say, as usual.[1] "Are not all our journals,—and the best of them, *Punch*, par excellence, —full of the most brilliantly swift and slight sketches, engraved on wood; while line-engravings take ten years to produce, and cost ten guineas each when they are done?"

Yes, that is so; but observe, in the first place, what appears to you a sketch on wood is not so at all, but a most laborious and careful imitation of a sketch on paper; whereas when you see what appears to be a sketch on metal, it *is* one. And in the second place, so far as the popular fashion is contrary to this natural method,—so far as we do in reality try to produce effects of sketching in wood, and of finish in metal,—our work is wrong.

Those apparently careless and free sketches on the wood ought to have been stern and deliberate; those exquisitely toned and finished engravings on metal ought to have looked, instead, like free ink sketches on white paper. That is the theorem which I propose to you for consideration, and which, in the two branches of its assertion, I hope to prove to you; the first part of it (that wood-cutting should be careful), in this present lecture; the second (that metal-cutting should be, at least in a far greater degree than it is now, slight, and free), in the following one.

79. Next, observe the distinction in respect of *thickness*,

[1] [Compare *Eagle's Nest*, § 89 (above, p. 187); and below, § 179, p. 420.]

no less than number, of lines which may properly be used in the two methods.

In metal engraving, it is easier to lay a fine line than a thick one; and however fine the line may be, it lasts;—but in wood engraving it requires extreme precision and skill to leave a thin dark line, and when left, it will be quickly beaten down by a careless printer. Therefore, the virtue of wood engraving is to exhibit the qualities and power of *thick* lines; and of metal engraving, to exhibit the qualities and power of *thin* ones.

All thin dark lines, therefore, in wood, broadly speaking, are to be used only in case of necessity; and thick lines, on metal, only in case of necessity.

80. Though, however, thin *dark* lines cannot easily be produced in wood, thin *light* ones may be struck in an instant. Nevertheless, even thin light ones must not be used, except with extreme caution. For observe, they are equally useless as outline, and for expression of mass. You know how far from exemplary or delightful your boy's first quite voluntary exercises in white line drawing on your slate were? You could, indeed, draw a goblin satisfactorily in such method;—a round O, with arms and legs to it, and a scratch under two dots in the middle, would answer the purpose; but if you wanted to draw a pretty face, you took pencil or pen, and paper—not your slate. Now, that instinctive feeling that a white outline is wrong, is deeply founded. For Nature herself draws with diffused light, and concentrated dark;—never, except in storm or twilight, with diffused dark, and concentrated light; and the thing we all like best to see drawn—the human face—cannot be drawn with white touches, but by extreme labour. For the pupil and iris of the eye, the eyebrow, the nostril, and the lip are all set in dark on pale ground. You can't draw a white eyebrow, a white pupil of the eye, a white nostril, and a white mouth, on a dark ground. Try it, and see what a spectre you get. But the same number of dark touches, skilfully applied, will give the idea of a beautiful

face. And what is true of the subtlest subject you have to represent, is equally true of inferior ones. Nothing lovely can be quickly represented by white touches. You must hew out, if your means are so restricted, the form by sheer labour; and that both cunning and dextrous. The Florentine masters, and Dürer, often practise the achievement, and there are many drawings by the Lippis, Mantegna, and other leading Italian draughtsmen, completed to great perfection with the white line; but only for the sake of severest study, nor is their work imitable by inferior men. And such studies, however accomplished, always mark a disposition to regard chiaroscuro too much, and local colour too little.

We conclude, then, that we must never trust, in wood, to our power of outline with white; and our general laws, thus far determined, will be—thick lines in wood; thin ones in metal; complete drawing on wood; sketches, if we choose, on metal.

81. But why, in wood, lines at all?[1] Why not cut out white *spaces*, and use the chisel as if its incisions were so much white paint? Many fine pieces of wood-cutting are indeed executed on this principle. Bewick does nearly all his foliage so; and continually paints the light plumes of his birds with single touches of his chisel, as if he were laying on white.

But this is not the finest method of wood-cutting. It implies the idea of a system of light and shade in which the shadow is totally black. Now, no light and shade can be good, much less pleasant, in which all the shade is stark black. Therefore the finest wood-cutting ignores light and shade, and expresses only form, and *dark local colour*. And it is convenient, for simplicity's sake, to anticipate what I should otherwise defer telling you until next lecture, that fine metal engraving, like fine wood-cutting, ignores light

[1] [The reader should here refer to *Art of England*, §§ 133, 134, where Ruskin says that in *Ariadne* he "did not enough explain this quite separate virtue of the material"—viz. "that by its tough elasticity it can preserve through any number of impressions the distinctness of a well cut line."]

and shade; and that, in a word, all good engraving whatsoever does so.

82. I hope that my saying so will make you eager to interrupt me. "What! Rembrandt's etchings, and Lupton's mezzotints, and Le Keux's line work,[1]—do you mean to tell us that these ignore light and shade?"

I never said that *mezzotint* ignored light and shade, or ought to do so. Mezzotint is properly to be considered as chiaroscuro drawing on metal. But I do mean to tell you that both Rembrandt's etchings, and Le Keux's finished line-work, are misapplied labour, in so far as they regard chiaroscuro; and that consummate engraving never uses it as a primal element of pleasure.

83. We have now got our principles so far defined that I can proceed to illustration of them by example.

Here are facsimiles, very marvellous ones,* of two of the best wood engravings ever produced by art,—two subjects in Holbein's Dance of Death. You will probably like best that I should at once proceed to verify my last and most startling statement, that fine engraving disdained chiaroscuro.

This vignette (Fig. 4) represents a sunset in the open mountainous fields of southern Germany. And Holbein is so entirely careless about the light and shade, which a Dutchman would first have thought of, as resulting from the sunset, that, as he works, he forgets altogether where his light comes from. Here, actually, the shadow of the figure is cast from the side, right across the picture, while the sun is in front. And there is not the slightest attempt to indicate gradation of light in the sky, darkness in the forest, or any other positive element of chiaroscuro.

* By Mr. Burgess. The toil and skill necessary to produce a facsimile of this degree of precision will only be recognized by the reader who has had considerable experience of actual work.[2]

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[1] [For other references to Rembrandt's etchings, see § 180; to Lupton's mezzotints, Vol. IX. pp. l., 15 *n.*; and to Le Keux's line engravings, Vol. V. p. 10.]

[2] [For Ruskin's tribute to Burgess, see Vol. XIV. pp. 349 *seq.*]

*Fig.* 4

The Last Furrow

(Facsimile from Holbein's Woodcut)

*Fig.* 5

The Two Preachers

(Facsimile from Holbein's Woodcut)

This is not because Holbein cannot give chiaroscuro if he chooses. He is twenty times a stronger master of it than Rembrandt; but he, therefore, knows exactly when and how to use it; and that wood engraving is not the proper means for it. The quantity of it which is needful for his story, and will not, by any sensational violence, either divert, or vulgarly enforce, the attention, he will give; and that with an unrivalled subtlety. Therefore I must ask you for a moment or two to quit the subject of technics, and look what these two woodcuts mean.

84. The one I have first shown you is of a ploughman ploughing at evening. It is Holbein's object, here, to express the diffused and intense light of a golden summer sunset, so far as is consistent with grander purposes. A modern French or English chiaroscurist would have covered his sky with fleecy clouds, and relieved the ploughman's hat and his horses against it in strong black, and put sparkling touches on the furrows and grass. Holbein scornfully casts all such tricks aside; and draws the whole scene in pure white, with simple outlines.

85. And yet, when I put it beside this second vignette (Fig. 5), which is of a preacher preaching in a feebly lighted church, you will feel that the diffused warmth of the one subject, and diffused twilight in the other, are complete; and they will finally be to you more impressive than if they had been wrought out with every superficial means of effect, on each block.

For it is as a symbol, not as a scenic effect, that in each case the chiaroscuro is given. Holbein, I said,[1] is at the head of the painter-reformers, and his Dance of Death[2] is the most energetic and telling of all the forms given, in this epoch, to the *Rationalist* spirit of reform, preaching the new Gospel of Death,—"It is no matter whether you are priest or layman, what you believe, or what you do: here is the end." You shall see, in the course of our inquiry,[3]

[1] [See §§ 43, 44 (above, p. 328).]
[2] [For other references to Holbein's "Dance of Death," see Vol. V. p. 131 *n.*]
[3] [Below, §§ 105, 183, 199 (pp. 364, 423, 436).]

that Botticelli, in like manner, represents the *Faithful* and *Catholic* temper of reform.

86. The teaching of Holbein is therefore always melancholy,—for the most part purely rational; and entirely furious in its indignation against all who, either by actual injustice in this life, or by what he holds to be false promise of another, destroy the good, or the energy, of the few days which man has to live. Against the rich, the luxurious, the Pharisee, the false lawyer, the priest, and the unjust judge, Holbein uses his fiercest mockery; but he is never himself unjust; never caricatures or equivocates; gives the facts as he knows them, with explanatory symbols, few and clear.

87. Among the powers which he hates, the pathetic and ingenious preaching of untruth is one of the chief; and it is curious to find his biographer, knowing this, and reasoning, as German critics nearly always do, from acquired knowledge, not perception, imagine instantly that he sees hypocrisy in the face of Holbein's preacher. "How skilfully," says Dr. Woltmann, "is the preacher propounding his doctrines; how thoroughly is his hypocrisy expressed in the features of his countenance, and in the gestures of his hands."[1] But look at the cut yourself, candidly. I challenge you to find the slightest trace of hypocrisy in either feature or gesture. Holbein knew better. It is not the hypocrite who has power in the pulpit. It is the *sincere* preacher of untruth who does mischief there.[2] The hypocrite's place of power is in trade, or in general society; none but the sincere ever get fatal influence in the pulpit. This man is a refined gentleman—ascetic, earnest, thoughtful, and kind. He scarcely uses the vantage even of his pulpit,—comes aside out of it, as an eager man would, pleading; he is intent on being understood—*is* understood; his congregation are delighted—you might hear a pin drop among them: one is asleep indeed, who cannot see him

[1] [See p. 276 of the book cited, above, on p. 326.]
[2] [Compare *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 120, where this passage is referred to.]

(being under the pulpit), and asleep just because the teacher is as gentle as he is earnest, and speaks quietly.

88. How are we to know, then, that he speaks in vain? First, because among all his hearers you will not find one shrewd face. They are all either simple or stupid people: there is one nice woman in front of all (else Holbein's representation had been caricature), but she is not a shrewd one.

Secondly, by the light and shade. The church is not in extreme darkness—far from that; a grey twilight is over everything, but the sun is totally shut out of it;—not a ray comes in even at the window—*that* is darker than the walls, or vault.

Lastly, and chiefly, by the mocking expression of Death. Mocking, but not angry. The man has been preaching what he thought true. Death laughs at him, but is not indignant with him.

Death comes quietly: *I* am going to be preacher now; here is your own hour-glass, ready for me. You have spoken many words in your day. But "of the things which you have spoken, *this* is the sum,"—your death-warrant, signed and sealed. There's your text for to-day.

89. Of this other picture, the meaning is more plain, and far more beautiful. The husbandman is old and gaunt, and has passed his days, not in speaking, but pressing the iron into the ground. And the payment for his life's work is, that he is clothed in rags, and his feet are bare on the clods; and he has no hat—but the brim of a hat only, and his long, unkempt grey hair comes through. But all the air is full of warmth and of peace; and, beyond his village church, there is, at last, light indeed. His horses lag in the furrow, and his own limbs totter and fail: but one comes to help him. "It is a long field," says Death; "but we'll get to the end of it to-day,—you and I."

90. And now that we know the meaning, we are able to discuss the technical qualities farther.

Both of these engravings, you will find, are executed

with blunt lines; but more than that, they are executed with *quiet* lines, entirely steady.

Now, here I have in my hand a lively woodcut of the present day—a good average type of the modern style of wood-cutting, which you will all recognise.*

The shade in this is drawn on the wood (not *cut*, but drawn, observe), at the rate of at least ten lines in a second: Holbein's, at the rate of about one line in three seconds.†

91. Now there are two different matters to be considered with respect to these two opposed methods of execution. The first, that the rapid work, though easy to the artist, is very difficult to the woodcutter; so that it implies instantly a separation between the two crafts, and that your woodcutter has ceased to be a draughtsman. I shall return to this point.[1] I wish to insist on the other first; namely, the effect of the more deliberate method on the drawing itself.

92. When the hand moves at the rate of ten lines in a second, it is indeed under the government of the muscles of the wrist and shoulder; but it cannot possibly be under the complete government of the brains. I am able to do this zigzag line evenly, because I have got the use of the hand from practice; and the faster it is done, the evener it will be. But I have no mental authority over every line I thus lay: chance regulates them. Whereas, when I draw at the rate of two or three seconds to each line, my hand disobeys the muscles a little—the mechanical accuracy is not so great; nay, there ceases to be any *appearance* of dexterity at all. But there is, in reality, more manual skill required in the slow work than in the swift,—and all the while the hand is thoroughly under the orders of the

* The ordinary title-page of *Punch*.

† In the lecture-room, the relative rates of execution were shown; I arrive at this estimate by timing the completion of two small pieces of shade in the two methods.

[1] [See below, § 96, p. 358.]

brains. Holbein deliberately resolves, for every line, as it goes along, that it shall be *so* thick, *so* far from the next, —that it shall begin here, and stop there. And he is deliberately assigning the utmost quantity of meaning to it, that a line will carry.

93. It is not fair, however, to compare common work of one age with the best of another. Here is a woodcut of Tenniel's, which I think contains as high qualities as it is possible to find in modern art.* I hold it as beyond others fine, because there is not the slightest caricature in it. No face, no attitude, is pushed beyond the degree of natural humour they would have possessed in life; and in precision of momentary expression, the drawing is equal to the art of any time, and shows power which would, if regulated, be quite adequate to producing an immortal work.

94. Why, then, is it *not* immortal? You yourselves, in compliance with whose demand it was done, forgot it the next week. It will become historically interesting; but no man of true knowledge and feeling will ever keep this in his cabinet of treasure, as he does these woodcuts of Holbein's.[1]

The reason is that this is base coin, — alloyed gold. There *is* gold in it, but also a quantity of brass and lead —wilfully added—to make it fit for the public. Holbein's is beaten gold, seven times tried in the fire.[2] Of which commonplace but useful metaphor the meaning here is, first, that to catch the vulgar eye a quantity of,—so-called, —light and shade is added by Tenniel. It is effective to an ignorant eye, and is ingeniously disposed; but it is entirely conventional and false, unendurable by any person who knows what chiaroscuro is.

* John Bull as Sir Oliver Surface, with Sir Peter Teasle and Joseph Surface. It appeared in *Punch*, early in 1863.[3]

[1] [Compare § 124 (below, p. 378).]

[2] [Psalms xii. 6, lxvi. 10; Daniel xii. 10; 1 Peter i. 7; Revelation iii. 18.]

[3] [A wrong reference. The cartoon appeared in the number for November 2, 1872, entitled "Astræa Redux," illustrating the appointment of Lord Selborne as Lord Chancellor. For other references to Tenniel, see below, §§ 100, 124, 179 (pp. 361, 378, 420); and Vol. XIX. p. 149 and *n*.]

Secondly, for one line that Holbein lays, Tenniel has a dozen. There are, for instance, a hundred and fifty-seven lines in Sir Peter Teazle's wig, without counting dots and slight cross-hatching;—but the entire face and flowing hair of Holbein's preacher are done with forty-five lines, all told.

95. Now observe what a different state of mind the two artists must be in on such conditions;—one, never in a hurry, never doing anything that he knows is wrong; never doing a line badly that he can do better; and appealing only to the feelings of sensitive persons, and the judgment of attentive ones. That is Holbein's habit of soul. What is the habit of soul of every modern engraver? Always in a hurry; everywhere doing things which he knows to be wrong—(Tenniel knows his light and shade to be wrong as well as I do)—continually doing things badly which he was able to do better; and appealing exclusively to the feelings of the dull, and the judgment of the inattentive.

Do you suppose that is not enough to make the difference between mortal and immortal art,—the original genius being supposed alike in both?*

96. Thus far of the state of the artist himself. I pass next to the relation between him and his subordinate, the woodcutter.

The modern artist requires him to cut a hundred and fifty-seven lines in the wig only,—the old artist requires him to cut forty-five for the face, and long hair, altogether. The actual proportion is roughly, and on the average, about one to twenty of cost in manual labour, ancient to modern, —the twentieth part of the mechanical labour, to produce an immortal instead of a perishable work,—the twentieth part of the labour; and—which is the greatest difference of

* In preparing these passages for the press, I feel perpetual need of qualifications and limitations, for it is impossible to surpass the humour, or precision of expressional touch, in the really golden parts of Tenniel's works; and they *may* be immortal, as representing what is best in their day.

all—that twentieth part, at once less mechanically difficult, and more mentally pleasant. Mr. Ottley, in his general *History of Engraving*,[1] says, "The greatest difficulty in wood engraving occurs in clearing out the minute quadrangular lights;" and in any modern woodcut you will see that where the lines of the drawing cross each other to produce shade, the white interstices are cut out so neatly that there is no appearance of any jag or break in the lines; they look exactly as if they had been drawn with a pen. It is chiefly difficult to cut the pieces clearly out when the lines cross at right angles; easier when they form oblique or diamond-shaped interstices; but in any case some half-dozen cuts, and in square crossings as many as twenty, are required to clear one interstice. Therefore if I carelessly draw six strokes with my pen across other six, I produce twenty-five interstices, each of which will need at least six, perhaps twenty, careful touches of the burin to clear out,—say ten for an average; and I demand two hundred and fifty exquisitely precise touches from my engraver, to render ten careless ones of mine.

97. Now I take up *Punch*, at his best. The whole of the left side of John Bull's waistcoat—the shadow on his knee-breeches and greatcoat—the whole of the Lord Chancellor's gown, and of John Bull's and Sir Peter Teazle's complexions, are worked with finished precision of cross-hatching. These have indeed some purpose in their texture; but in the most wanton and gratuitous way, the wall below the window is cross-hatched too, and that not with a double, but a treble line (Fig. 4).

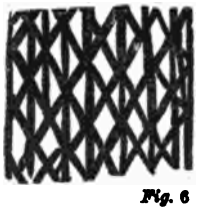


*Fig. 6*

There are about thirty of these columns, with thirty-five interstices each: approximately, 1050—certainly not fewer—interstices to be deliberately cut clear, to get that two inches square of shadow.

[1] [*An Inquiry into the Origin and Early History of Engraving*, by William Young Ottley, 1816, vol. i. p. 4.]

Now calculate—or think enough to feel the impossibility of calculating—the number of woodcuts used daily for our popular prints, and how many men are night and day cutting 1050 square holes to the square inch, as the occupation of their manly life. And Mrs. Beecher Stowe and the North Americans fancy they have abolished slavery![1]

98. The workman cannot have even the consolation of pride; for his task, even in its finest accomplishment, is not really difficult,—only tedious. When you have once got into the practice, it is as easy as lying. To cut regular holes *without* a purpose is easy enough; but to cut *ir*regular holes *with* a purpose, that is difficult, for ever;—no tricks of tool or trade will give you power to do that.

The supposed difficulty—the thing which, at all events, it takes time to learn, is to cut the interstices neat, and each like the other. But is there any reason, do you suppose, for their being neat, and each like the other? So far from it, they would be twenty times prettier if they were irregular, and each different from the other. And an old woodcutter, instead of taking pride in cutting these interstices smooth and alike, resolutely cuts them rough and irregular; taking care, at the same time, never to have any more than are wanted, this being only one part of the general system of intelligent manipulation, which made so good an artist of the engraver that it is impossible to say of any standard old woodcut, whether the draughtsman engraved it himself or not. I should imagine, from the character and subtlety of the touch, that every line of the Dance of Death had been engraved by Holbein; we know it was not, and that there can be no certainty given by even the finest pieces of wood execution of anything more than perfect harmony between the designer and workman. And consider how much this harmony demands in the latter. Not that the modern engraver is unintelligent in applying

[1] [Compare what Ruskin says of the slavery of engraving in *The Cestus of Aglaia*, § 55 (Vol. XIX. p. 103); and for his views on slavery and the American Civil War, see Vol. XVII. pp. 254 *n.*, 432, 476.]

his mechanical skill: very often he greatly improves the drawing; but we never could mistake his hand for Holbein's.

99. The true merit, then, of wood execution, as regards this matter of cross-hatching, is first that there be no more crossing than necessary; secondly, that all the interstices be various, and rough. You may look through the entire series of the Dance of Death without finding any cross-hatching whatever, except in a few unimportant bits of background, so rude as to need scarcely more than one touch to each interstice. Albert Dürer crosses more definitely; but yet, in any fold of his drapery, every white spot differs in size from every other, and the arrangement of the whole is delightful, by the kind of variety which the spots on a leopard have.[1]

On the other hand, where either expression or form can be rendered by the shape of the lights and darks, the old engraver becomes as careful as in an ordinary ground he is careless.

The endeavour, with your own hand, and common pen and ink, to copy a small piece of either of the two Holbein woodcuts (Figures 4 and 5) will prove this to you better than any words.

100. I said that, had Tenniel been rightly trained, there might have been the making of a Holbein, or nearly a Holbein, in him. I do not know; but I can turn from his work to that of a man who was not trained at all, and who was, without training, Holbein's equal.

Equal, in the sense that this brown stone, in my left hand, is the equal, though not the likeness, of that in my right. They are both of the same true and pure crystal; but the one is brown with iron, and never touched by forming hand; the other has never been in rough companionship, and has been exquisitely polished. So with these two men. The one was the companion of Erasmus

[1] [Compare Ruskin's many references to the quality of ποικίλια, or spottiness in art: Vol. XX. p. 349 n.]

and Sir Thomas More.[1] His father was so good an artist that you cannot always tell their drawings asunder. But the other was a farmer's son; and learned his trade in the back shops of Newcastle.

Yet the first book I asked you to get was his biography;[2] and in this frame are set together a drawing by Hans Holbein, and one by Thomas Bewick.[3] I know which is most scholarly; but I do *not* know which is best.

101. It is much to say for the self-taught Englishman;—yet do not congratulate yourselves on his simplicity. I told you, a little while since, that the English nobles had left the history of birds to be written, and their spots to be drawn, by a printer's lad;[4]—but I did not tell you their farther loss in the fact that this printer's lad could have written their own histories, and drawn their own spots, if they had let him. But they had no history to be written; and were too closely maculate to be portrayed;—white ground in most places altogether obscured. Had there been Mores and Henrys to draw, Bewick could have drawn them; and would have found his function. As it was, the nobles of his day left him to draw the frogs, and pigs, and sparrows—of his day, which seemed to him, in his solitude, the best types of its Nobility.[5] No sight or thought of beautiful things was ever granted him;—no heroic creature, goddess-born—how much less any native Deity—ever shone upon him. To his utterly English mind, the straw of the sty, and its tenantry, were abiding truth;—the cloud of Olympus, and its tenantry, a child's dream. He could draw a pig, but not an Aphrodite.[6]

102. The three pieces of woodcut from his Fables (the

[1] [Compare "Sir Joshua and Holbein," § 15 (Vol. XIX. p. 13).]

[2] [See *Aratra Pentelici*, § 210 (Vol. XX. p. 355 and *n.*).]

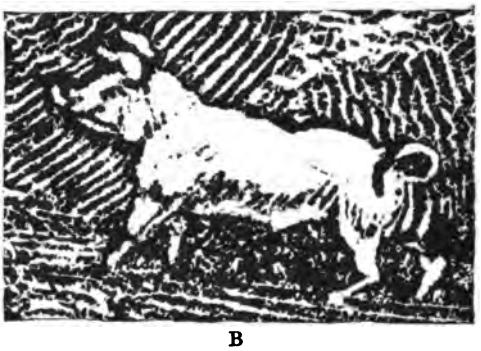
[3] [Ruskin did not place this frame in his School.]

[4] [A reference to the first of a course of lectures on Birds, delivered in March 1873: see *Love's Meinie*, § 3. For a partial correction of the statement, see below, p. 458 *n.*]

[5] [For a similar reference to Bewick's satirical intent, see Vol. XIII. p. 435 *n.*]

[6] [The phrase is here repeated from the lecture on "The School of Florence," *Aratra Pentelici*, § 210 (Vol. XX. p. 356), and *Lectures on Landscape*, § 80 (above, p. 58).]

A



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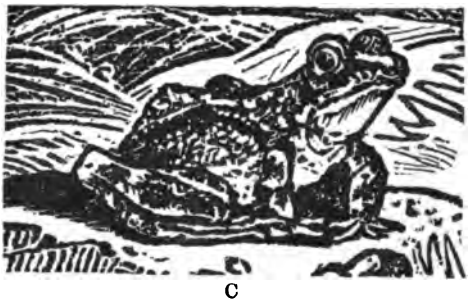

C

**Things Celestial and Terrestrial as Apparent to the English Mind**

two lower ones enlarged) in the opposite plate,[1] show his utmost strength and utmost rudeness. I must endeavour to make you thoroughly understand both:—the magnificent artistic power, the flawless virtue, veracity, tenderness,—the infinite humour of the man; and yet the difference between England and Florence, in the use they make of such gifts in their children.

For the moment, however, I confine myself to the examination of technical points; and we must follow our former conclusions a little further.

103. Because our lines in wood must be thick, it becomes an extreme virtue in wood engraving to economize lines,—not merely, as in all other art, to save time and power, but because, our lines being necessarily blunt, we must make up our minds to do with fewer, by many, than are in the object. But is this necessarily a disadvantage?

*Absolutely*, an immense disadvantage,—a woodcut never can be so beautiful or good a thing as a painting, or line engraving. But in its own separate and useful way, an excellent thing, because, practised rightly, it exercises in the artist, and summons in you, the habit of abstraction;[2] that is to say, of deciding what are the essential points in the things you see, and seizing these; a habit entirely necessary to strong humanity; and so natural to all humanity, that it leads, in its indolent and undisciplined states, to all the vulgar amateur's liking of sketches better than pictures.[3] The sketch seems to put the thing for him into a concentrated and exciting form.

104. Observe, therefore, to guard you from this error, that a bad sketch is good for nothing; and that nobody can make a good sketch unless they generally are trying to

[1] [All are from Bewick's *Æsop*. The Venus (here reversed) is from the headpiece to "The Young Man and his Cat," p. 361; the pig is from the tailpiece to "The Boar and the Ass," p. 206; the frog is from the tailpiece to "The Frogs and their King," p. 136. The two enlargements are in the Educational Series, Nos. 188 and 187 (Vol. XXI. p. 91). For further reference to the Venus, see below, §§ 127, 154, 158, 162 (pp. 380, 399, 400, 403, 407).]

[2] [Compare the parallel passage in *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 110 (Vol. XIX. p. 154).]

[3] [Compare Vol. V. p. 186.]

finish with extreme care. But the abstraction of the essential particulars in his subject by a line-master, has a peculiar didactic value. For painting, when it is complete, leaves it much to your own judgment what to look at; and, if you are a fool, you look at the wrong thing;—but in a fine woodcut, the master says to you, "You *shall* look at this, or at nothing."

105. For example, here is a little tailpiece of Bewick's, to the fable of the Frogs and the Stork.* He is, as I told you, as stout a reformer as Holbein,† or Botticelli, or Luther, or Savonarola; and, as an impartial reformer, hits right and left, at lower or upper classes, if he sees them wrong. Most frequently, he strikes at vice, without reference to class; but in this vignette he strikes definitely at the degradation of the viler popular mind which is incapable of being governed, because it cannot understand the nobleness of kingship. He has written—better than written, engraved, sure to suffer no slip of type—his legend under the drawing; so that we know his meaning:

"Set them up with a king, indeed!"

106. There is an audience of seven frogs, listening to a speaker, or croaker, in the middle; and Bewick has set himself to show in all, but especially in the speaker, essential frogginess of mind—the marsh temper. He could not have done it half so well in painting as he has done by the abstraction of wood-outline. The characteristic of a manly mind, or body, is to be gentle in temper, and firm in constitution; the contrary essence of a froggy mind and body is to be angular in temper, and flabby in constitution. I have enlarged Bewick's orator-frog for you, Plate I. c., and I think you will feel that he is entirely expressed in those essential particulars.

* From Bewick's *Æsop's Fables*.[1]

† See *ante*, § 48 [p. 328].

[1] [Here Ruskin showed the tailpiece, from which the lowest of the three figures on Plate XXV. is taken.]

This being perfectly good wood-cutting, notice especially its deliberation. No scrawling or scratching, or cross-hatching, or "*free*" work of any sort. Most deliberate laying down of solid lines and dots, of which you cannot change one. The real difficulty of wood engraving is to cut every one of these black lines or spaces of the exactly right shape, and not at all to cross-hatch them cleanly.

107. Next, examine the technical treatment of the pig, above. I have purposely chosen this as an example of a white object on dark ground, and the frog as a dark object on light ground, to explain to you what I mean by saying that fine engraving regards local colour, but not light and shade.[1] You see both frog and pig are absolutely without light and shade. The frog, indeed, casts a shadow; but his hind leg is as white as his throat. In the pig you don't even know which way the light falls. But you know at once that the pig is white, and the frog brown or green.

108. There are, however, two pieces of chiaroscuro *implied* in the treatment of the pig. It is assumed that his curly tail would be light against the background—dark against his own rump. This little piece of heraldic quartering is absolutely necessary to solidify him. He would have been a white ghost of a pig, flat on the background, but for that alternative tail, and the bits of dark behind the ears. Secondly: Where the shade is necessary to suggest the position of his ribs, it is given with graphic and chosen points of dark, as few as possible; not for the sake of the shade at all, but of the skin and bone.

109. That, then, being the law of refused chiaroscuro, observe further the method of outline. We said[2] that we were to have thick lines in wood, if possible. Look what thickness of black outline Bewick has left under our pig's chin, and above his nose.

But that is not a line at all, you think?

No;—a modern engraver would have made it one, and

[1] [Above, § 81, p. 351.]
[2] [Above, § 79, p. 349.]

prided himself on getting it fine. Bewick leaves it actually thicker than the snout, but puts all his ingenuity of touch to vary the forms, and break the extremities of his white cuts, so that the eye may be refreshed and relieved by new forms at every turn. The group of white touches filling the space between snout and ears might be a wreath of fine-weather clouds, so studiously are they grouped and broken.

And nowhere, you see, does a single black line cross another.

Look back to Figure 6, page 359, and you will know, henceforward, the difference between good and bad woodcutting.

110. We have also, in the lower woodcut, a notable instance of Bewick's power of abstraction. You will observe that one of the chief characters of this frog, which makes him humorous,—next to his vain endeavour to get some firmness into his fore feet,—is his obstinately angular hump-back. And you must feel, when you see it so marked, how important a general character of a frog it is to have a hump-back,—not at the shoulders, but the loins.

111. Here, then, is a case in which you will see the exact function that anatomy should take in art.[1]

All the most scientific anatomy in the world would never have taught Bewick, much less you, how to draw a frog.

But when once you *have* drawn him, or looked at him, so as to know his points, it then becomes entirely interesting to find out *why* he has a hump-back. So I went myself yesterday to Professor Rolleston for a little anatomy, just as I should have gone to Professor Phillips for a little geology;[2] and the Professor brought me a fine little active frog; and we put him on the table, and made him jump all over it, and then the Professor brought in a charming

[1] [On this subject compare *Eagle's Nest*, §§ 154 *seq.* (above, pp. 227 *seq.*).]

[2] [George Rolleston (1829–1881), F.R.S.; Linacre professor of anatomy and physiology, 1860–1881. For John Phillips, see above, p. 232 *n.*]

Squelette[1] of a frog, and showed me that he needed a projecting bone from his rump, as a bird needs it from its breast,—the one to attach the strong muscles of the hind legs, as the other to attach those of the fore legs or wings. So that the entire leaping power of the frog is in his hump-back, as the flying power of the bird is in its breast-bone. And thus this Frog Parliament is most literally a Rump Parliament—everything depending on the hind legs, and nothing on the brains; which makes it wonderfully like some other Parliaments we know of nowadays, and Mr. Ayrton and Mr. Lowe for their æsthetic and acquisitive eyes, and a rump of Railway Directors.[2]

112. Now, to conclude, for want of time only—I have but touched on the beginning of my subject,—understand clearly and finally this simple principle of all art, that the best is that which realizes absolutely, if possible. Here is a viper by Carpaccio:[3] you are afraid to go near it. Here is an arm-chair by Carpaccio: you who came in late, and are standing, to my regret, would like to sit down in it. This is consummate art; but you can only have that with consummate means, and exquisitely trained and hereditary mental power.

With inferior means, and average mental power, you must be content to give a rude abstraction; but if rude abstraction *is* to be made, think what a difference there must be between a wise man's and a fool's; and consider what heavy responsibility lies upon you in your youth, to determine, among realities, by what you will be delighted, and, among imaginations, by whose you will be led.

[1] [See Vol. VI. p. 398.]

[2] [Acton Sime Ayrton (1816–1886), first commissioner of works (1869–1873), was at this time giving much offence by his Philistinism and rudeness of manner (see a reference to him in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 82). Robert Lowe, Viscount Sherbrooke (1811–1892), was at this time Chancellor of the Exchequer (1868–1873); as a champion of the straitest sect of the *laisser faire* school of economists, he was particularly unsympathetic to Ruskin (see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 81, "Notes and Correspondence," and *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*, § 20). For Ruskin's views of Railway Directors, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 28 and 35.]

[3] [See No. 171 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 90); but the example is no longer at Oxford. Nor is the "arm-chair" by Carpaccio, which was perhaps a copy of the one in the picture of "St. Jerome in his Study."]

# LECTURE IV

## THE TECHNICS OF METAL ENGRAVING

**118.** We are to-day to examine the proper methods for the technical management of the most perfect of the arms of precision possessed by the artist. For you will at once understand that a line cut by a finely-pointed instrument upon the smooth surface of metal is susceptible of the utmost fineness that can be given to the *definite* work of the human hand. In drawing with pen upon paper, the surface of the paper is slightly rough; necessarily, two points touch it instead of one, and the liquid flows from them more or less irregularly, whatever the draughtsman's skill. But you cut a metallic surface with one edge only; the furrow drawn by a skater on the surface of ice is like it on a large scale. Your surface is polished, and your line may be wholly faultless, if your hand is.

**114.** And because, in such material, effects may be produced which no penmanship could rival, most people, I fancy, think that a steel plate half engraves itself; that the workman has no trouble with it, compared to that of a pen draughtsman.

To test your feeling in this matter accurately, here is a manuscript book written with pen and ink, and illustrated with flourishes and vignettes.

You will all, I think, be disposed, on examining it, to exclaim, How wonderful! and even to doubt the possibility of every page in the book being completed in the same manner. Again, here are three of my own drawings, executed with the pen, and Indian ink, when I was fifteen. They are copies from large lithographs by Prout;[1] and I

[1] [For Ruskin's making of these copies, see *Præterita*, i. § 84.]

The Star of Florence

Allen & Co. Sc.

The Star of Florence

Allen & Co. Sc.

imagine that most of my pupils would think me very tyrannical if I requested them to do anything of the kind themselves. And yet, when you see in the shop windows a line engraving like this,* or this,* either of which contains, alone, as much work as fifty pages of the manuscript book, or fifty such drawings as mine, you look upon its effect as quite a matter of course,—you never say "how wonderful" *that* is, nor consider how you would like to have to live, by producing anything of the same kind yourselves.

115. Yet you cannot suppose it is in reality easier to draw a line with a cutting point, not seeing the effect at all, or, if any effect, seeing a gleam of light instead of darkness, than to draw your black line at once on the white paper? You cannot really think † that there is something complacent, sympathetic, and helpful in the nature of steel; so that while a pen-and-ink sketch may always be considered an achievement proving cleverness in the sketcher, a sketch on steel comes out by mere favour of the indulgent metal; or that the plate is woven like a piece of pattern silk, and the pattern is developed by pasteboard cards punched full of holes? Not so. Look close at this engraving, or take a smaller and simpler one, Turner's Mercury and Argus,—imagine it to be a drawing in pen and ink, and yourself required similarly to produce its parallel! True, the steel point has the one advantage of not blotting, but it has tenfold or twentyfold disadvantage, in that you

* Miller's large plate of the Grand Canal, Venice, after Turner; and Goodall's, of Tivoli, after Turner. The other examples referred to are left in the University Galleries.[1]

† This paragraph was not read at the lecture, time not allowing:—it is part of what I wrote on engraving some years ago, in the papers for the *Art Journal*, called the *Cestus of Aglaia*.[2]

[1] [The engravings are in the Ruskin Art Collection; Reference Series, Nos. 153 and 154 (Vol. XXI. p. 41). For another reference to Miller's, see below, § 135, p. 385. Ruskin's copies from Prout's lithographs were afterwards removed by him; he presented one of them to Mr. Macdonald.]

[2] [The small editions add "Refer now to *On the Old Road*," where several passages from the *Cestus* were then printed. See in this edition Vol. XIX. pp. 90–92.]

cannot slur, nor efface, except in a very resolute and laborious way, nor play with it, nor even see what you are doing with it at the moment, far less the effect that is to be. You must *feel* what you are doing with it, and know precisely what you have got to do; how deep, how broad, how far apart your lines must be, etc. and etc. (a couple of lines of etceteras would not be enough to imply all you must know). But suppose the plate *were* only a pen drawing: take your pen—your finest—and just try to copy the leaves that entangle the head of Io,[1] and her head itself; remembering always that the kind of work required here is mere child's play compared to that of fine figure engraving. Nevertheless, take a small magnifying glass to this—count the dots and lines that gradate the nostrils and the edges of the facial bone; notice how the light is left on the top of the head by the stopping, at its outline, of the coarse touches which form the shadows under the leaves; examine it well, and then—I humbly ask of you—try to do a piece of it yourself! You clever sketcher—you young lady or gentleman of genius—you eye-glassed dilettante—you current writer of criticism royally plural,—I beseech you,—do it yourself; do the merely etched outline yourself, if no more. Look you,—you hold your etching-needle this way, as you would a pencil, nearly; and then,—you scratch with it! it is as easy as lying. Or if you think that too difficult, take an easier piece;—take either of the light sprays of foliage that rise against the fortress on the right, pass your lens[2] over them—look how their fine outline is first drawn, leaf by leaf; then how the distant rock is put in between, with broken lines, mostly stopping before they touch the leaf-outline; and again, I pray you, do it yourself,—if not on that scale, on a larger. Go on into the hollows of the distant rock,—traverse its thickets,—number its towers;—count how many lines there are in a laurel bush—in an arch—in a casement; some hundred and fifty,

[1] [The *Cestus* reads ". . . entangle the nearest cow's head and the head itself."]
[2] [For "pass your lens," the *Cestus* reads "put your glass."]

or two hundred, deliberately drawn lines, you will find, in every square quarter of an inch;—say *three thousand to the inch*,—each, with skilful intent, put in its place! and then consider what the ordinary sketcher's work must appear, to the men who have been trained to this!

116. "But might not more have been done by three thousand lines to a square inch?" you will perhaps ask. Well, possibly. It may be with lines as with soldiers: three hundred, knowing their work thoroughly, may be stronger than three thousand less sure of their aim. We shall have to press close home this question about numbers and purpose presently;—it is not the question now. Suppose certain results required,—atmospheric effects, surface textures, transparencies of shade, confusions of light,—then, more could *not* be done with less. There are engravings of this modern school, of which, with respect to their particular aim, it may be said, most truly, they "cannot be better done."[1]

Here is one just finished,—or, at least, finished to the eyes of ordinary mortals, though its fastidious master means to retouch it;—a quite pure line engraving, by Mr. Charles Henry Jeens;[2] (in calling it pure line, I mean that there are no mixtures of mezzotint or any mechanical tooling, but all is steady hand-work,) from a picture by Mr. Armytage, which, without possessing any of the highest claims to admiration, is yet free from the vulgar vices which disgrace most of our popular religious art; and is so sweet in the fancy of it as to deserve, better than many works of higher power, the pains of the engraver to make it a common possession. It is meant to help us to imagine the evening of the day when the father and mother of Christ had been seeking Him through Jerusalem: they have come to a well where women are drawing water; St. Joseph

[1] [Here the reprint from the *Cestus of Aglaia* ends. The reference is to earlier passages in that essay, where Dürer's saying was quoted: see Vol. XIX. pp. 52, 72.]

[2] [1827–1879. The engraving here referred to is of "Joseph and Mary," by E. Armytage, R.A. For another reference to the artist, see Vol. XIV. p. 268.]

passes on,—but the tired Madonna, leaning on the well's margin, asks wistfully of the women if they have seen such and such a child astray. Now will you just look for a while into the lines by which the expression of the weary and anxious face is rendered; see how unerring they are,—how calm and clear; and think how many questions have to be determined in drawing the most minute portion of any one,—its curve,—its thickness,—its distance from the next,—its own preparation for ending, invisibly, where it ends. Think what the precision must be in these that trace the edge of the lip, and make it look quivering with disappointment, or in these which have made the eyelash heavy with restrained tears.

117. Or if, as must be the case with many of my audience, it is impossible for you to conceive the difficulties here overcome, look merely at the draperies, and other varied substances represented in the plate; see how silk, and linen, and stone, and pottery, and flesh, are all separated in texture, and gradated in light, by the most subtle artifices and appliances of line,—of which artifices, and the nature of the mechanical labour throughout, I must endeavour to give you to-day a more distinct conception than you are in the habit of forming. But as I shall have to blame some of these methods in their general result, and I do not wish any word of general blame to be associated with this most excellent and careful plate by Mr. Jeens, I will pass, for special examination, to one already in your Reference Series, which for the rest exhibits more various treatment in its combined landscape, background, and figures; the Belle Jardinière of Raphael, drawn and engraved by the Baron Desnoyers.[1]

You see, in the first place, that the ground, stones, and other coarse surfaces are distinguished from the flesh and draperies by broken and wriggled lines. Those broken lines cannot be executed with the burin, they are etched in the

[1] [See Reference Series, No. 103 (Vol. XXI. p. 36); and for a further reference to the engraving, § 231 (below, p. 465).]

early states of the plate, and are a modern artifice, never used by old engravers; partly because the older men were not masters of the art of etching, but chiefly because even those who were acquainted with it would not employ lines of this nature. They have been developed by the importance of landscape in modern engraving, and have produced some valuable results in small plates, especially of architecture. But they are entirely erroneous in principle, for the surface of stones and leaves is not broken or jagged in this manner, but consists of mossy, or blooming, or otherwise organic texture, which cannot be represented by these coarse lines; their general consequence has therefore been to withdraw the mind of the observer from all beautiful and tender characters in foreground, and eventually to destroy the very school of landscape engraving which gave birth to them.

Considered, however, as a means of relieving more delicate textures, they are in some degree legitimate, being, in fact, a kind of chasing or jagging one part of the plate surface in order to throw out the delicate tints from the rough field. But the same effect was produced with less pains, and far more entertainment to the eye, by the older engravers, who employed purely ornamental variations of line; thus in Plate XXVIII., opposite p. 386, the drapery is sufficiently distinguished from the grass by the treatment of the latter as an ornamental arabesque. The grain of wood is elaborately engraved by Marc Antonio, with the same purpose, in the plate given in your Standard Series.[1]

118. Next, however, you observe what difference of texture and force exists between the smooth, continuous lines themselves, which are all really *engraved*. You must take some pains to understand the nature of this operation.

The line is first cut lightly through its whole course, by absolute decision and steadiness of hand, which you may endeavour to imitate if you like, in its simplest phase, by

[1] [No. 15; for Ruskin's note upon it, see Vol. XXI. p. 19.]

drawing a circle with your compass-pen; and then, grasping your penholder so that you can push the point like a plough, describing other circles inside or outside of it, in exact parallelism with the mathematical line, and at exactly equal distances. To approach, or depart, with your point at finely gradated intervals, may be your next exercise, if you find the first unexpectedly easy.

119. When the line is thus described in its proper course, it is ploughed deeper, where depth is needed, by a second cut of the burin, first on one side, then on the other, the cut being given with gradated force so as to take away most steel where the line is to be darkest. Every line of gradated depth in the plate has to be thus cut eight or ten times over at least, with retouchings to smooth and clear all in the close. Jason has to plough his field ten-furrow deep, with his fiery oxen well in hand, all the while.[1]

When the essential lines are thus produced in their several directions, those which have been drawn across each other, so as to give depth of shade, or richness of texture, have to be farther enriched by dots in the interstices; else there would be a painful appearance of network everywhere; and these dots require each four or five jags to produce them; and each of these jags must be done with what artists and engravers alike call "feeling,"—the sensibility, that is, of a hand completely under mental government. So wrought, the dots look soft, and like touches of paint; but mechanically dug in, they are vulgar and hard.

120. Now, observe, that, for every piece of shadow throughout the work, the engraver has to decide with what quantity and kind of line he will produce it. Exactly the same quantity of black, and therefore the same depth of tint in general effect, may be given with six thick lines; or with twelve, of half their thickness; or with eighteen, of a third of the thickness. The second six, second twelve, or

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 180 (Vol. XX. p. 328).]

second eighteen, may cross the first six, first twelve, or first eighteen, or go between them; and they may cross at any angle. And then the third six may be put between the first six, or between the second six, or across both, and at any angle. In the network thus produced, any kind of dots may be put in the severally shaped interstices. And for any of the series of superadded lines, dots, of equivalent value in shade, may be substituted. (Some engravings are wrought in dots altogether.) Choice infinite, with multiplication of infinity, is, at all events, to be made, for every minute space, from one side of the plate to the other.

121. The excellence of a beautiful engraving is primarily in the use of these resources to exhibit the qualities of the original picture, with delight to the eye in the method of translation; and the language of engraving, when once you begin to understand it, is, in these respects, so fertile, so ingenious, so ineffably subtle and severe in its grammar, that you may quite easily make it the subject of your life's investigation, as you would the scholarship of a lovely literature.

But in doing this, you would withdraw, and necessarily withdraw, your attention from the higher qualities of art, precisely as a grammarian, who is that, and nothing more, loses command of the subject and substance of thought. And the exquisitely mysterious mechanisms of the engraver's method have, in fact, thus entangled the intelligence of the careful draughtsmen of Europe; so that since the final perfection of this translator's power, all the men of finest patience and finest hand have stayed content with it;—the subtlest draughtsmanship has perished from the canvas,* and

* An effort has lately been made in France, by Meissonier, Gérome, and their school, to recover it, with marvellous collateral skill of engravers. The etching of Gérome's "Louis XIV. and Molière" is one of the completest pieces of skilful mechanism ever put on metal.[1]

[1] [For Gérome, see below, § 240, p. 472; and compare Vol. XV. p. 497 *n*. The picture, here referred to, was exhibited in 1863 to illustrate the following passage from the *Mémoires de Madame Campan:* "Alors le roi se tournant vers les familliers de sa cour: 'vous me voyez,' leur dit-il, 'occupé de faire manger Molière, que mes officiers ne trouvent pas d'assez bonne compagnie pour eux.'"]

sought more popular praise in this labyrinth of disciplined language, and more or less dulled or degraded thought. And, in sum, I know no cause more direct or fatal, in the destruction of the great schools of European art, than the perfectness of modern line engraving.

122. This great and profoundly to be regretted influence I will prove and illustrate to you on another occasion.[1] My object to-day is to explain the perfectness of the art itself; and above all to request you, if you will not look at pictures instead of photographs, at least not to allow the cheap merits of the chemical operation to withdraw your interest from the splendid human labour of the engraver. Here is a little vignette from Stothard,[2] for instance, in Rogers's *Poems*, to the lines,

> "Soared in the swing, half pleased and half afraid,
> 'Neath sister elms, that waved their summer shade."

You would think, would you not? (and rightly) that of all difficult things to express with crossed black lines and dots, the face of a young girl must be the most difficult. Yet here you have the face of a bright girl, radiant in light, transparent, mysterious, almost breathing,—her dark hair involved in delicate wreath and shade, her eyes full of joy and sweet playfulness,—and all this done by the exquisite order and gradation of a very few lines, which, if you will examine them through a lens, you find dividing and chequering the lip, and cheek, and chin, so strongly that you would have fancied they could only produce the effect of a grim iron mask. But the intelligences of order and form guide them into beauty, and inflame them with delicatest life.

123. And do you see the size of this head? About as large as the bud of a forget-me-not! Can you imagine the fineness of the little pressures of the hand on the steel, in

[1] [See Appendix, Article I. (below, pp. 463, 464).]

[2] [In the "Pleasures of Memory"; on p. 10 of the *Poems*. Rogers wrote "Thro'," not "'Neath."]

that space, which, at the edge of the almost invisible lip, fashioned its less or more of smile?

My chemical friends, if you wish ever to know anything rightly concerning the arts, I very urgently advise you to throw all your vials and washes down the gutter-trap; and if you will ascribe, as you think it so clever to do, in your modern creeds, all virtue to the sun, use that virtue through your own heads and fingers, and apply your solar energies to draw a skilful line or two, for once or twice in your life. You may learn more by trying to engrave, like Goodall,[1] the tip of an ear, or the curl of a lock of hair, than by photographing the entire population of the United States of America,—black, white, and neutral-tint.

And one word, by the way, touching the complaints I hear at my having set you to so fine work that it hurts your eyes. You have noticed that all great sculptors—and most of the great painters of Florence—began by being goldsmiths.[2] Why do you think the goldsmith's apprenticeship is so fruitful? Primarily, because it forces the boy to do small work, and mind what he is about. Do you suppose Michael Angelo learned his business by dashing or hitting at it? He laid the foundation of all his after power by doing precisely what I am requiring my own pupils to do,—copying German engravings in facsimile![3] And for your eyes—you all sit up at night till you haven't got any eyes worth speaking of. Go to bed at half-past nine, and get up at four, and you'll see something out of them, in time.

124. Nevertheless, whatever admiration you may be brought to feel, and with justice, for this lovely workmanship,—the more distinctly you comprehend its merits, the more distinctly also will the question rise in your mind,

[1] [Stothard's vignette, if that be here referred to, was, however, engraved by Finden. Goodall engraved most of the vignettes by Turner in Rogers's *Poems*, but not those by Stothard.]

[2] [Compare *A Joy for Ever*, §§ 45–46 *n.* (Vol. XVI. p. 46), and *Lectures on Art*, § 141 (Vol. XX. p. 131).]

[3] [See, again, *Lectures on Art*, § 141.]

How is it that a performance so marvellous has yet taken no rank in the records of art of any permanent or acknowledged kind? How is it that these vignettes from Stothard and Turner,* like the woodcuts from Tenniel, scarcely make the name of the engraver known; and that they never are found side by side with this older and apparently ruder art, in the cabinets of men of real judgment? The reason is precisely the same as in the case of the Tenniel woodcut. This modern line engraving is alloyed gold. Rich in capacity, astonishing in attainment, it nevertheless admits wilful fault, and misses what it ought first to have attained. It is therefore, to a certain measure, vile in its perfection; while the older work is noble even in its failure, and classic no less in what it deliberately refuses, than in what it rationally and rightly prefers and performs.

125. Here, for instance, I have enlarged the head of one of Dürer's Madonnas for you[1] out of one of his most careful plates.† You think it very ugly. Well, so it is. Don't be afraid to think so, nor to say so. Frightfully ugly; vulgar also. It is the head, simply, of a fat Dutch girl, with all the pleasantness left out. There is not the least doubt about that. Don't let anybody force Albert Dürer down your throats; nor make you expect pretty

* I must again qualify the too sweeping statement of the text. I think, as time passes, some of these nineteenth-century line engravings will become monumental. The first vignette of the garden, with the cut hedges and fountain, for instance, in Rogers's *Poems*[2] is so consummate in its use of every possible artifice of delicate line (note the look of *tremulous* atmosphere got by the undulatory etched lines on the pavement, and the broken masses, worked with dots, of the fountain foam), that I think it cannot but, with some of its companions, survive the refuse of its school, and become classic. I find in like manner, even with all their faults and weaknesses, the vignettes to Heyne's *Virgil*[3] to be real art-possessions.

† Plate XXXV., in the Appendix [p. 478], taken from the engraving of the Virgin sitting in the fenced garden, with two angels crowning her.

[1] [The enlargement (a photograph) is No. 144 in the Reference Series (Vol. XXI. p. 40).]

[2] [The frontispiece to "The Pleasures of Memory." The drawing by Turner is No. 220 in the National Gallery (for a reference to it, see Vol. III. p. 306). The engraving is by Mills.]

[3] [For another reference to these vignettes, see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 107 (Vol. XIX. p. 152).]

things from him. Stothard's young girl in the swing,[1] or Sir Joshua's Age of Innocence,[2] is in quite angelic sphere of another world, compared to this black domain of poor, laborious Albert. We are not talking of female beauty, so please you, just now, gentlemen, but of engraving. And the merit, the classical, indefeasible, immortal merit of this head of a Dutch girl with all the beauty left out, is in the fact that every line of it, as engraving, is as good as can be;—good, not with the mechanical dexterity of a watchmaker, but with the intellectual effort and sensitiveness of an artist who knows precisely what can be done, and ought to be attempted, with his assigned materials. He works easily, fearlessly, flexibly; the dots are not all measured in distance; the lines not all mathematically parallel or divergent. He has even missed his mark at the mouth in one place, and leaves the mistake, frankly. But there are no petrified mistakes; nor is the eye so accustomed to the look of the mechanical furrow as to accept it for final excellence. The engraving is full of the painter's higher power and wider perception; it is classically perfect, because duly subordinate, and presenting for your applause only the virtues proper to its own sphere. Among these, I must now reiterate, the first of all is the *decorative* arrangement of *lines*.

126. You all know what a pretty thing a damask tablecloth is, and how a pattern is brought out by threads running one way in one space, and across in another. So, in lace, a certain delightfulness is given by the texture of meshed lines.

Similarly, on any surface of metal, the object of the engraver is, or ought to be, to cover it with lovely *lines*, forming a lacework, and including a variety of spaces, delicious to the eye.

And this is his business, primarily; before any other

[1] [In the vignette above referred to, § 123, p. 377.]

[2] [No. 307 in the National Gallery; for other references to the picture, see Vol. XIX. p. 250, and *Art of England*, § 66.]

matter can be thought of, his work must be ornamental. You know I told you a sculptor's business is first to cover a surface with pleasant *bosses*, whether they mean anything or not; so an engraver's is to cover it with pleasant *lines*, whether they mean anything or not. That they should mean something, and a good deal of something, is indeed desirable afterwards; but first we must be ornamental.

127. Now if you will compare Plate XXVI. at the beginning of this lecture, which is a characteristic example of good Florentine engraving, and represents the Planet and power of Aphrodite, with the Aphrodite of Bewick in the upper division of Plate XXV., you will at once understand the difference between a primarily ornamental, and a primarily realistic, style.[1] The first requirement in the Florentine work, is that it shall be a lovely arrangement of lines; a pretty thing upon a page. Bewick *has* a secondary notion of making his vignette a pretty thing upon a page. But he is overpowered by his vigorous veracity, and bent first on giving you his idea of Venus. Quite right, he would have been, mind you, if he had been carving a statue of her on Mount Eryx;[2] but not when he was engraving a vignette to Æsop's fables. To engrave well is to ornament a surface well, not to create a realistic impression. I beg your pardon for my repetitions; but the point at issue is the root of the whole business, and I *must* get it well asserted, and variously.

Let me pass to a more important example.

128. Three years ago, in the rough first arrangement of the copies in the Educational Series, I put an outline of the top of Apollo's sceptre, which, in the catalogue, was said to be probably by Baccio Baldini of Florence, for your first real exercise; it remains so, the olive being put first only for its mythological rank.[3]

[1] [For a comparison of the two plates from other points of view, see below, §§ 158, 162 (pp. 403, 407).]

[2] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 206 (Vol. XX. p. 352).]

[3] [The references here are to an earlier arrangement of the series. The "Apollo's Sceptre" is now No. 8; the olive, No. 10: see Vol. XXI. pp. 75, 76.]

"At ev'ning from the top of Fesole"

The series of engravings to which the plate from which that exercise is copied belongs, are part of a number, executed chiefly, I think, from early designs of Sandro Botticelli, and some in great part by his hand.[1] He and his assistant, Baccio, worked together; and in such harmony, that Baldini probably often does what Sandro wants, better than Sandro could have done it himself; and, on the other hand, there is no design of Baldini's over which Sandro does not seem to have had influence.

And wishing now to show you three examples of the finest work of the old, the renaissance, and the modern schools,—of the old, I will take Baccio Baldini's Astrologia,[2] Plate XXVII., opposite. Of the renaissance, Dürer's Adam and Eve.[3] And of the modern, this head of the daughter of Herodias, engraved from Luini by Beaugrand,[4] which is as affectionately and sincerely wrought, though in the modern manner, as any plate of the old schools.

129. Now observe the progress of the feeling for light and shade in the three examples.

The first is nearly all white paper; you think of the outline as the constructive element throughout.

The second is a vigorous piece of *white* and *black*—not of *light* and *shade*,—for all the high lights are equally white, whether of flesh, or leaves, or goat's hair.

The third is complete in chiaroscuro, as far as engraving can be.

Now the dignity and virtue of the plates is in the exactly inverse ratio of their fulness in chiaroscuro.[5]

Baldini's is excellent work, and of the very highest school. Dürer's entirely accomplished work, but of an

[1] [On this subject see the Introduction; above, p. xxxviii.]

[2] [For another discussion of this figure of Astrologia, see the passage from Ruskin's MS. given as a note to *Sesame and Lilies*, § 123 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 170–172); and for a further reference to it, see below, § 220, p. 450.]

[3] [Standard Series, No. 10 (Vol. XXI. p. 17).]

[4] [Reference Series, No. 160 (Vol. XXI. p. 42). The head, however, is that not of the daughter of Herodias, but of a saint.]

[5] [Compare above, §§ 81, 107 (pp. 351–352, 365); and below, §§ 136, 230 (pp. 385, 464).]

inferior school. And Beaugrand's, excellent work, but of a vulgar and non-classical school.

And these relations of the schools are to be determined by the quality in the *lines;* we shall find that in proportion as the light and shade is neglected, the lines are studied; that those of Baldini are perfect; of Dürer perfect, only with a lower perfection; but of Beaugrand, entirely faultful.

180. I have just explained to you that in modern engraving the lines are cut in clean furrow, widened, it may be, by successive cuts; but, whether it be fine or thick, retaining always, when printed, the aspect of a continuous line drawn with the pen, and entirely black throughout its whole course.

Now we may increase the delicacy of this line to any extent by simply printing it in grey colour instead of black. I obtained some very beautiful results of this kind in the later volumes of *Modern Painters,* with Mr. Armytage's help, by using subdued purple tints;[1] but, in any case, the line thus engraved must be monotonous in its character, and cannot be expressive of the finest qualities of form.

Accordingly, the old Florentine workmen constructed the line *itself,* in important places, of successive minute touches, so that it became a chain of delicate links which could be opened or closed at pleasure.* If you will examine through a lens the outline of the face of this Astrology, you will find it is traced with an exquisite series of minute touches, susceptible of accentuation or change absolutely at the engraver's pleasure; and, in result, corresponding to the finest conditions of a pencil line drawing by a consummate master. In the fine plates of this period, you have thus the

* The method was first developed in engraving designs on silver—numbers of lines being executed with dots by the punch, for variety's sake. For niello, and printing, a transverse cut was substituted for the blow. The entire style is connected with the later Roman and Byzantine method of drawing lines with the drill hole, in marble. See above, Lecture II., Section 70 [p. 345].

[1] [See in vol. v. (Vol. VII. pp. 53, 94), Plates 53 (grey) and 59 (purple). Some early proofs of other plates are in existence, also printed in purple.]

united powers of the pen and pencil, and both absolutely secure and multipliable.

181. I am a little proud of having independently discovered, and had the patience to carry out, this Florentine method of execution for myself, when I was a boy of thirteen. My good drawing-master[1] had given me some copies calculated to teach me freedom of hand; the touches were rapid and vigorous,—many of them in mechanically regular zigzags, far beyond any capacity of mine to imitate in the bold way in which they were done. But I was resolved to have them, somehow; and actually facsimiled a considerable portion of the drawing in the Florentine manner, with the finest point I could cut to my pencil, taking a quarter of an hour to forge out the likeness of one return in the zigzag which my master carried down through twenty returns in two seconds; and so successfully, that he did not detect my artifice till I showed it him,—on which he forbade me ever to do the like again. And it was only thirty years afterwards that I found I had been quite right after all, and working like Baccio Baldini! But the patience which carried me through that early effort, served me well through all the thirty years, and enabled me to analyze, and in a measure imitate, the method of work employed by every master; so that, whether you believe me or not at first, you will find what I tell you of their superiority, or inferiority, to be true.

182. When lines are studied with this degree of care, you may be sure the master will leave room enough for you to see them and enjoy them, and not use any at random. All the finest engravers, therefore, leave much white paper, and use their entire power on the outlines.

183. Next to them come the men of the Renaissance schools, headed by Dürer, who, less careful of the beauty and refinement of the line, delight in its vigour, accuracy, and complexity. And the essential difference between these men and the moderns is that these central masters cut

[1] [Mr. Runciman: see *Præterita*, i. §§ 84, 87, 239.]

their line for the most part with a single furrow, giving it depth by force of hand or wrist, and retouching, *not in the furrow itself, but with others beside it.** Such work can only be done well on copper, and it can display all faculty of hand or wrist, precision of eye, and accuracy of knowledge, which a human creature can possess. But the dotted or hatched line is not used in this central style, and the higher conditions of beauty never thought of.

In the Astrology of Baldini,—and remember that the Astrologia of the Florentine meant what we mean by Astronomy, and much more,[1]—he wishes you first to look at the face: the lip half open, faltering in wonder; the amazed, intense, dreaming gaze; the pure dignity of forehead, undisturbed by terrestrial thought. None of these things could be so much as attempted in Dürer's method; he can engrave flowing hair, skin of animals, bark of trees, wreathings of metal-work, with the free hand; also, with laboured chiaroscuro, or with sturdy line, he can reach expressions of sadness, or gloom, or pain, or soldierly strength,—but pure beauty,—never.

184. Lastly, you have the Modern school, deepening its lines in successive cuts. The instant consequence of the introduction of this method is the restriction of curvature; you cannot follow a complex curve again with precision through its furrow. If you are a dextrous ploughman, you can drive your plough any number of times along the simple curve. But you cannot repeat again exactly the motions which cut a variable one.† You may retouch it, energize it, and deepen it in parts, but you cannot cut it all through again equally. And the retouching and energizing in parts is a living and intellectual process; but the cutting all through, equally, a mechanical one. The

* This most important and distinctive character was pointed out to me by Mr. Burgess.

† This point will be further examined and explained in the Appendix.[2]

[1] [See *Mornings in Florence*, § 104.]

[2] [This, however, was not done. In writing the Appendix after a long interval, Ruskin gave up the idea of making it as complete as he had intended: see § 229 (p. 463).]

difference is exactly such as that between the dexterity of turning out two similar mouldings from a lathe, and carving them with the free hand, like a Pisan sculptor. And although splendid intellect, and subtlest sensibility, have been spent on the production of some modern plates, the mechanical element introduced by their manner of execution always overpowers both; nor *can any plate of consummate value ever be produced in the modern method.*

135. Nevertheless, in landscape, there are two examples in your Reference Series, of insuperable skill and extreme beauty: Miller's plate, before instanced, of the Grand Canal, Venice;[1] and E. Goodall's of the upper fall of the Tees.[2] The men who engraved these plates might have been exquisite artists; but their patience and enthusiasm were held captive in the false system of lines, and we lost the painters; while the engravings, wonderful as they are, are neither of them worth a Turner etching, scratched in ten minutes with the point of an old fork; and the common types of such elaborate engraving are none of them worth a single frog, pig, or puppy, out of the corner of a Bewick vignette.

136. And now, I think, you cannot fail to understand clearly what you are to look for in engraving, as a separate art from that of painting. Turn back to the "Astrologia" as a perfect type of the purest school. She is gazing at stars, and crowned with them. But the stars are *black* instead of shining! You cannot have a more decisive and absolute proof that you must not look in engraving for chiaroscuro.

Nevertheless, her body is half in shade, and her left foot; and she casts a shadow, and there is a bar of shade behind her.

All these are merely so much acceptance of shade as may relieve the forms, and give value to the linear portions. The face, though turned from the light, is shadowless.[3]

[1] [See above, § 114 *n.*, p. 369.]

[2] [An impression of this plate is No. 152 in the Reference Series (Vol. XXI. p. 41).]

[3] [Not entirely so, in the finished plate: see, on this subject, § 246 (below, p. 477).]

Again. Every lock of the hair is designed and set in its place with the subtlest care, but there is no lustre attempted,—no texture,—no mystery. The plumes of the wings are set studiously in their places,—they, also, lustreless. That even their filaments are not drawn, and that the broad curve embracing them ignores the anatomy of a bird's wing, are conditions of design, not execution. Of these in a future lecture.*

137. The "Poesia," Plate XXVIII., opposite, is a still more severe, though not so generic, an example; its decorative foreground reducing it almost to the rank of goldsmith's ornamentation.[1] I need scarcely point out to you that the flowing water shows neither lustre nor reflection; but notice that the observer's attention is supposed to be so close to every dark touch of the graver that he will see the minute dark spots which indicate the sprinkled shower falling from the vase into the pool.

138. This habit of strict and calm attention, constant in the artist, and expected in the observer, makes all the difference between the art of Intellect, and of mere sensation. For every detail of this plate has a meaning, if you care to understand it. This is Poetry, sitting by the fountain of Castalia, which flows first out of a formal urn, to show that it is not artless; but the rocks of Parnassus are behind, and on the top of them—only one tree, like a mushroom with a thick stalk. You at first are inclined to say, How very absurd, to put only one tree on Parnassus! but this one tree is the Immortal Plane Tree, planted by Agamemnon,[2] and at once connects our Poesia with the *Iliad*. Then, this is the hem of the robe of Poetry,—this is the divine vegetation which springs up under her feet,—this is the heaven and earth united by her power,—this is the fountain of Castalia flowing out afresh among the grass,

* See Appendix, Article I.[3]

[1] [Compare § 117 (above, p. 373).]

[2] [See Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xvi. 238: "Sunt auctores et Delphicam platanum Agamemnonis manu satam."]

[3] [The intended discussion was, however, not given; compare p. 384 *n.*]

Allen. & Co. Sc.

"By the Springs of Parnassus"

—and these are the drops with which, out of a pitcher, Poetry is nourishing the fountain of Castalia.

All which you may find out if you happen to know anything about Castalia, or about poetry; and pleasantly think more upon, for yourself. But the poor dunces, Sandro and Baccio, feeling themselves but "goffi nell' arte,"[1] have no hope of telling you all this, except suggestively. They can't engrave grass of Parnassus, nor sweet springs so as to look like water; but they can make a pretty damasked surface with ornamental leaves, and flowing lines, and so leave you something to think of—if you will.

139. "But a great many people won't, and a great many more can't; and surely the finished engravings are much more delightful, and the only means we have of giving any idea of finished pictures, out of our reach."

Yes, all that is true; and when we examine the effects of line engraving upon taste in recent art, we will discuss these matters;[2] for the present, let us be content with knowing what the best work is, and why it is so. Although, however, I do not now press further my cavils at the triumph of modern line engraving, I must assign to you, in few words, the reason of its recent decline. Engravers complain that photography and cheap woodcutting have ended their finer craft.[3] No complaint can be less grounded. They themselves destroyed their own craft, by vulgarizing it. Content in their beautiful mechanism, they ceased to learn, and to feel, as artists; they put themselves under the order of publishers and printsellers; they worked indiscriminately from whatever was put into their hands,—from Bartlett[4] as willingly as from Turner, and from Mulready as carefully as from Raphael. They filled the windows of printsellers, the pages of gift books, with elaborate rubbish, and piteous

[1] [See above, § 46, p. 329.]
[2] [See Appendix, Article I. (below, pp. 463, 464).]
[3] [See *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 37 (Vol. XIX. pp. 88–89).]
[4] [W. H. Bartlett (1809–1854), topographical landscape painter. There are nineteen volumes of travels in quarto, containing more than 1000 engravings from his drawings.]

abortions of delicate industry. They worked cheap, and cheaper,—smoothly, and more smoothly,—they got armies of assistants, and surrounded themselves with schools of mechanical tricksters, learning their stale tricks with blundering avidity. They had fallen—before the days of photography—into providers of frontispieces for housekeepers' pocket-books. I do not know if photography itself, their redoubted enemy, has even now ousted them from that last refuge.

140. Such the fault of the engraver,—very pardonable; scarcely avoidable,—however fatal. Fault mainly of humility. But what has *your* fault been, gentlemen? what the patrons' fault, who have permitted so wide waste of admirable labour, so pathetic a uselessness of obedient genius? It was yours to have directed, yours to have raised and rejoiced in, the skill, the modesty, the patience of this entirely gentle and industrious race;—copyists with their *heart*. The common painter-copyists who encumber our European galleries with their easels and pots, are, almost without exception, persons too stupid to be painters, and too lazy to be engravers. The real copyists—the men who can put their soul into another's work—are employed at home, in their narrow rooms, striving to make their good work profitable to all men. And in their submission to the public taste they are truly national servants as much as Prime Ministers are. They fulfil the demand of the nation; what, as a people, you wish to have for possession in art, these men are ready to give you.

And what have you hitherto asked of them?—Ramsgate Sands, and Dolly Vardens, and the Paddington Station,[1]—these, I think, are typical of your chief demands; the cartoons of Raphael—which you don't care to see themselves; and, by way of a flight into the empyrean, the

[1] [The reference is to three popular pictures by W. P. Frith, R.A.—"Ramsgate Sands" (exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1854); "Dolly Varden" (exhibited at the British Gallery, 1842); and "The Railway Station" (exhibited separately in 1862).]

Madonna di San Sisto. And literally, there are hundreds of cities and villages in Italy in which roof and wall are blazoned with the noblest divinity and philosophy ever imagined by men; and of all this treasure, I can, as far as I know, give you not *one* example, in line engraving, by an English hand![1]

Well, you are in the main matter right in this. You want essentially Ramsgate Sands and the Paddington Station, because there you can see—yourselves!

Make yourselves, then, worthy to be seen for ever, and let English engraving become noble as the record of English loveliness and honour.

[1] [Compare below, p. 471.]

# LECTURE V

## DESIGN IN THE GERMAN SCHOOLS OF ENGRAVING

141. By reference to the close of the preface to *Eagle's Nest*,[1] you will see, gentlemen, that I meant these lectures, from the first, rather to lead you to the study of the characters of two great men, than to interest you in the processes of a secondary form of art. As I draw my materials into the limited form necessary for the hour, I find my divided purpose doubly failing; and would fain rather use my time to-day in supplying the defects of my last lecture, than in opening the greater subject, which I must treat with still more lamentable inadequacy. Nevertheless, you must not think it is for want of time that I omit reference to other celebrated engravers, and insist on the special power of these two only. Many not inconsiderable reputations are founded merely on the curiosity of collectors of prints, or on partial skill in the management of processes; others, though resting on more secure bases, are still of no importance to you in the general history of art; whereas you will find the work of Holbein and Botticelli determining for you, without need of any farther range, the principal questions of moment in the relation of the Northern and Southern schools of design. Nay, a wider method of inquiry would only render your comparison less accurate in result. It is only in Holbein's majestic range of capacity, and only in the particular phase of Teutonic life which his art adorned, that the problem can be dealt with on fair terms. We Northerns

[1] [See above, p. 122.]

can advance no fairly comparable antagonist to the artists of the South, except at that one moment, and in that one man. Rubens cannot for an instant be matched with Tintoret, nor Memling with Lippi; while Reynolds only rivals Titian in what he learned from him. But in Holbein and Botticelli we have two men trained independently, equal in power of intellect, similar in material and mode of work, contemporary in age, correspondent in disposition. The relation between them is strictly typical of the constant aspects to each other of the Northern and Southern schools.

142. Their point of closest contact is in the art of engraving, and this art is developed entirely as the servant of the great passions which perturbed or polluted Europe in the fifteenth century. The impulses which it obeys are all new; and it obeys them with its own nascent plasticity of temper. Painting and sculpture are only modified by them; but engraving is educated.

These passions are in the main three; namely,

1. The thirst for classical literature, and the forms of proud and false taste which arose out of it, in the position it had assumed as the enemy of Christianity.
2. The pride of science, enforcing (in the particular domain of Art) accuracy of perspective, shade, and anatomy, never before dreamed of.
3. The sense of error and iniquity in the theological teaching of the Christian Church, felt by the highest intellects of the time, and necessarily rendering the formerly submissive religious art impossible.

To-day, then, our task is to examine the peculiar characters of the Design of the Northern Schools of Engraving, as affected by these great influences.

143. I have not often, however, used the word "design,"[1]

[1] [That is, in his Oxford lectures. He had lectured upon design, and defined it in *The Two Paths:* see Vol. XVI. p. 285.]

and must clearly define the sense in which I now use it. It is vaguely used in common art-parlance; often as if it meant merely the drawing of a picture, as distinct from its colour; and in other still more inaccurate ways. The accurate and proper sense, underlying all these, I must endeavour to make clear to you.

"Design" properly signifies that power in any art-work which has a purpose other than of imitation, and which is "designed," composed, or separated to that end. It implies the rejection of some things, and the insistence upon others, with a given object.*

Let us take progressive instances. Here is a group of prettily dressed peasant children, charmingly painted by a very able modern artist[1]—not absolutely without design, for he really wishes to show you how pretty peasant children can be (and, in so far, is wiser and kinder than Murillo, who likes to show how ugly they can be);[2] also, his group

* If you paint a bottle only to amuse the spectator by showing him how like a painting may be to a bottle, you cannot be considered, in art-philosophy, as a designer. But if you paint the cork flying out of the bottle, and the contents arriving in an arch at the mouth of a recipient glass, you are so far forth a designer or signer; probably meaning to express certain ultimate facts respecting, say, the hospitable disposition of the landlord of the house; but at all events representing the bottle and glass in a designed, and not merely natural, manner. Not merely natural—nay, in some sense non-natural, or supernatural. And all great artists show both this fantastic condition of mind in their work, and show that it has arisen out of a communicative or didactic purpose. They are the Sign-painters of God.

I have added this note to the lecture in copying my memoranda of it here at Assisi, June 9th,[3] being about to begin work in the Tavern, or Tabernaculum, of the Lower Church, with its variously significant four great "signs."

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[1] [The editors are unable to say what picture was here shown; there is no such example in the collections of the Ruskin Drawing School. Ruskin in his own copy notes that his reference was to a "chromo-lithograph after Birket Foster"; for whom see Vol. XIV. p. 299, and *Art of England*, § 112.]

[2] [Compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 228).]

[3] [1874. By the tabernacle, Ruskin means the altar-space; and by the "signs" of this sacred "tavern," the four great frescoes of Giotto—"Poverty," "Chastity," "Obedience," and "S. Francis in Glory." For "taverns" and "tabernacles," see *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 36, 83, and 84.]

is agreeably arranged, and its component children carefully chosen. Nevertheless, any summer's day, near any country village, you may come upon twenty groups in an hour as pretty as this; and may see—if you have eyes—children in them twenty times prettier than these. A photograph, if it could render them perfectly, and in colour, would far excel the charm of this painting; for in it, good and clever as it is, there is nothing supernatural, and much that is subnatural.

144. Beside this group of, in every sense of the word, "artless" little country girls, I will now set one—in the best sense of the word—"artful" little country girl,—a sketch by Gainsborough.[1]

You never saw her like before. Never will again, now that Gainsborough is dead. No photography,—no science,—no industry, will touch or reach for an instant this *super*-naturalness. You will look vainly through the summer fields for such a child. "Nor up the lawn, nor by the wood,"[2] is she. Whence do you think this marvellous charm has come? Alas! if we knew, would not we all be Gainsboroughs? This only you may practically ascertain, as surely as that a flower will die if you cut its root away, that you cannot alter a single touch in Gainsborough's work without injury to the whole. Half-a-dozen spots, more or less, in the printed gowns of these other children whom I first showed you, will not make the smallest difference to them; nor a lock or two more or less in their hair, nor a dimple or two more or less in their cheeks. But if you alter one wave of the hair of Gainsborough's girl, the child is gone. Yet the art is so subtle, that I do not expect you to believe this. It looks so instinctive, so easy, so "chanceux,"—the French word is better than ours. Yes, and in their more accurate sense, also, "Il a de la chance."

[1] [Reproduced as frontispiece to this volume; it is a half-length sketch in oil. It was a *trouvaille* of Arthur Burgess, who picked it up in South London for three guineas. Ruskin insisted on giving him 300 for it; the picture is at Brantwood.]

[2] [Gray's *Elegy*, 28: "Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he."]

A stronger Designer than he was with him. He could not tell you himself how the thing was done.

145. I proceed to take a more definite instance—this Greek head of the Lacinian Juno.[1] The design or appointing of the forms now entirely prevails over the resemblance to Nature. No real hair could ever be drifted into these wild lines, which mean the wrath of the Adriatic winds round the Cape of Storms.

And yet, whether this be uglier or prettier than Gainsborough's child—(and you know already what *I* think about it, that no Greek goddess was ever half so pretty as an English girl, of pure clay and temper,[2])—uglier or prettier, it is more dignified and impressive. It at least belongs to the domain of a lordlier, more majestic, more guiding and ordaining art.

146. I will go back another five hundred years, and place an Egyptian beside the Greek divinity.[3] The resemblance to Nature is now all but lost, the ruling law has become all. The lines are reduced to an easily counted number, and their arrangement is little more than a decorative sequence of pleasant curves cut in porphyry,—in the upper part of their contour following the outline of a woman's face in profile, over-crested by that of a hawk, on a kind of pedestal. But that the sign-engraver meant by his hawk, Immortality, and by her pedestal, the House or Tavern of Truth, is of little importance now to the passing traveller, not yet preparing to take the sarcophagus for his place of rest.

147. How many questions are suggested to us by these transitions! Is beauty contrary to law, and grace attainable

[1] [One of several enlarged studies from Greek coins; now in the archæological department of the University Galleries. A photogravure of the coin is given on Plate XX. in Vol. XX.; see p. 340 *n.*, for the Cape of Storms, and compare Vol. XIX. p. 271 (No. 16).]

[2] [See *Queen of the Air*, § 167 (Vol. XIX. p. 413), and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 194 (Vol. XX. p. 342).]

[3] [Ruskin here showed a drawing of the head of an Egyptian queen from a sarcophagus in the Southern Egyptian Gallery at the British Museum; see Appendix vi. in Vol. XX., where (p. 411) an outline of the figure is given.]

only through license? What we gain in language, shall we lose in thought? and in what we add of labour, more and more forget its ends?

Not so.

Look at this piece of Sandro's work, the Libyan Sibyl.*

It is as ordered and normal as the Egyptian's—as graceful and facile as Gainsborough's. It retains the majesty of old religion; it is invested with the joy of newly awakened childhood.

Mind, I do not expect you—do not wish you—to enjoy Botticelli's dark engraving as much as Gainsborough's aerial sketch; for due comparison of the men, painting should be put beside painting. But there is enough even in this copy of the Florentine plate to show you the junction of the two powers in it—of prophecy, and delight.

148. Will these two powers, do you suppose, be united in the same manner in the contemporary Northern art? That Northern school is my subject to-day; and yet I give you, as type of the intermediate condition between Egypt and England—not Holbein, but Botticelli. I am obliged to do this; because in the Southern art, the religious temper remains unconquered by the doctrines of the Reformation. Botticelli was—what Luther wished to be, but could not be—a reformer still believing in the Church: his mind is at peace; and his art, therefore, can pursue the delight of beauty, and yet remain prophetic. But it was far otherwise in Germany. There the Reformation of manners became the destruction of faith; and art therefore, not a prophecy, but a protest. It is the chief work of the greatest Protestant who ever lived,† which I ask you to study with me to-day.

149. I said that the power of engraving had developed itself during the introduction of three new—(practically and

* Plate XXXIV., Lecture VI. [p. 454].

† I do not mean the greatest teacher of reformed faith; but the greatest protestant against faith unreformed.

vitally new, that is to say)—elements, into the minds of men: elements which briefly may be expressed thus:

1. Classicism, and Literary Science.
2. Medicine, and Physical Science.*
3. Reformation, and Religious Science.

And first of Classicism.

You feel, do not you, in this typical work of Gainsborough's, that his subject as well as his picture is "artless" in a lovely sense;—nay, not only artless, but ignorant, and unscientific, in a beautiful way? You would be afterwards remorseful, I think, and angry with yourself—seeing the effect produced on her face—if you were to ask this little lady to spell a very long word? Also, if you wished to know how many times the sevens go in forty-nine, you would perhaps wisely address yourself elsewhere. On the other hand, you do not doubt that *this* lady† knows very well how many times the sevens go in forty-nine, and is more Mistress of Arts than any of us are Masters of them.

150. You have then, in the one case, a beautiful simplicity, and a blameless ignorance; in the other, a beautiful artfulness, and a wisdom which you do not dread,—or, at least, even though dreading, love. But you know also that we may remain in a hateful and culpable ignorance; and, as I fear too many of us in competitive effort feel, become possessed of a hateful knowledge.

Ignorance, therefore, is not evil absolutely; but, innocent, may be lovable.

Knowledge also is not good absolutely; but, guilty, may be hateful.

* It has become the permitted fashion among modern mathematicians, chemists, and apothecaries, to call themselves "scientific men," as opposed to theologians, poets, and artists. They know their sphere to be a separate one; but their ridiculous notion of its being a peculiarly scientific one ought not to be allowed in our Universities. There is a science of Morals, a science of History, a science of Grammar, a science of Music, and a science of Painting; and all these are quite beyond comparison higher fields for human intellect, and require accuracies of intenser observation, than either chemistry, electricity, or geology.

† The Cumæan Sibyl, Plate XXXI., Lecture VI. [p. 448].

So, therefore, when I now repeat my former statement, that the first main opposition between the Northern and Southern schools is in the simplicity of the one, and the scholarship of the other, that statement may imply sometimes the superiority of the North, and sometimes of the South. You may have a heavenly simplicity opposed to a hellish (that is to say, a lustful and arrogant) scholarship; or you may have a barbarous and presumptuous ignorance opposed to a divine and disciplined wisdom. Ignorance opposed to learning in both cases; but evil to good, as the case may be.

151. For instance: the last time I was standing before Raphael's arabesques in the Loggias of the Vatican,[1] I wrote down in my pocket-book the description, or, more modestly speaking, the inventory, of the small portion of that infinite wilderness of sensual fantasy which happened to be opposite me. It consisted of a woman's face, with serpents for hair, and a virgin's breasts, with stumps for arms, ending in blue butterflies' wings, the whole changing at the waist into a goat's body, which ended below in an obelisk upside-down, to the apex at the bottom of which were appended, by graceful chains, an altar, and two bunches of grapes.

Now you know in a moment, by a glance at this "design"—beautifully struck with free hand, and richly gradated in colour,—that the master was familiar with a vast range of art and literature: that he knew all about Egyptian sphinxes, and Greek Gorgons; about Egyptian obelisks, and Hebrew altars; about Hermes, and Venus, and Bacchus, and satyrs, and goats, and grapes.

You know also—or ought to know, in an instant,—that all this learning has done him no good; that he had better have known nothing than any of these things, since they were to be used by him only to such purpose; and that his delight in armless breasts, legless trunks, and obelisks upside-down, has been the last effort of his

[1] [In May 1872.]

expiring sensation, in the grasp of corrupt and altogether victorious Death. And you have thus, in Gainsborough as compared with Raphael, a sweet, sacred, and living simplicity, set against an impure, profane, and paralyzed knowledge.

152. But, next, let us consider the reverse conditions.

Let us take instance of contrast between faultful and treacherous ignorance, and divinely pure and fruitful knowledge.

In the place of honour at the end of one of the rooms of your Royal Academy four years ago stood a picture by an English Academician, announced as a representation of Moses sustained by Aaron and Hur, during the discomfiture of Amalek.[1] In the entire range of the Pentateuch, there is no other scene (in which the visible agents are mortal only) requiring so much knowledge and thought to reach even a distant approximation to the probabilities of the fact. One saw in a moment that the painter was both powerful and simple, after a sort; that he had really sought for a vital conception, and had originally and earnestly read his text, and formed his conception. And one saw also in a moment that he had chanced upon this subject, in reading or hearing his Bible, as he might have chanced on a dramatic scene accidentally in the street;—that he knew nothing of the character of Moses,—nothing of his law,—nothing of the character of Aaron, nor of the nature of a priesthood,—nothing of the meaning of the event which he was endeavouring to represent, of the temper in which it would have been transacted by its agents, or of its relations to modern life.

153. On the contrary, in the fresco of the earlier scenes in the life of Moses, by Sandro Botticelli,[2] you know—not

[1] [The picture known as "Victory, O Lord," or "Joshua," by Millais, now in the Manchester City Art Gallery, was exhibited at the Academy in 1871, four years before the publication of this part of *Ariadne*. Compare Vol. V. p. 87 *n*.]

[2] [This is one of the series in the Sistine Chapel, enumerated below, § 209 (p. 442), as "Entrance on his Ministry by Moses"; otherwise called "Scenes from the Early Life of Moses." For a note on the "Moses" as characteristic of the expressiveness of the Florentine school, see Vol. XVI. p. 272 *n*. See also Vol. IV. p. 350.]

"in a moment,"[1] for the knowledge of knowledge cannot be so obtained; but in proportion to the discretion of your own reading, and to the care you give to the picture, you *may* know,—that here is a sacredly guided and guarded learning; here a Master indeed, at whose feet you may sit safely, who can teach you, better than in words, the significance of both Moses' law and Aaron's ministry; and not only these, but, if he chose, could add to this an exposition as complete of the highest philosophies both of the Greek nation, and of his own; and could as easily have painted, had it been asked of him, Draco, or Numa, or Justinian, as the herdsman of Jethro.

154. It is rarely that we can point to an opposition between faultful, because insolent, ignorance, and virtuous, because gracious, knowledge, so direct, and in so parallel elements, as in this instance. In general, the analysis is much more complex. It is intensely difficult to indicate the mischief of involuntary and modest ignorance, calamitous only in a measure; fruitful in its lower field, yet sorrowfully condemned to that lower field—not by sin, but fate.

When first I introduced you to Bewick, we closed our too partial estimate of his entirely magnificent powers with one sorrowful concession—he could draw a pig, but not a Venus.[2]

Eminently he could so, because—which is still more sorrowfully to be conceded—he liked the pig best. I have put now in your Educational Series a whole galaxy of pigs by him;[3] but, hunting all the fables through, I find only one Venus, and I think you will all admit that she is an unsatisfactory Venus.* There is honest simplicity here;

* Lecture III., § 101 [Plate XXV., p. 363].

[1] [Ruskin takes up his words as used in § 152, with a side reference possibly to a rebuke administered by him, as recounted in the Introduction to Vol. XX. p. xxxix.]

[2] [Again (as in § 101, above) a reference to the lecture on "The School of Florence" (Vol. XX. p. 356).]

[3] [See Vol. XXI. p. 91.]

but you regret it; you miss something that you find in Holbein, much more in Botticelli. You see in a moment that this man knows nothing of Sphinxes, or Muses, or Graces, or Aphrodites; and, besides, that knowing nothing, he would have no liking for them even if he saw them; but much prefers the style of a well-to-do English housekeeper with corkscrew curls, and a portly person.

155. You miss something, I said, in Bewick which you find in Holbein. But do you suppose Holbein himself, or any other Northern painter, could wholly quit himself of the like accusations? I told you, in the second of these lectures, that the Northern temper, refined from savageness, and the Southern, redeemed from decay, met, in Florence.[1] Holbein and Botticelli are the purest types of the two races. Holbein is a civilized boor; Botticelli a reanimate Greek.[2] Holbein was polished by companionship with scholars and kings, but remains always a burgher of Augsburg in essential nature. Bewick and he are alike in temper; only the one is untaught, the other perfectly taught. But Botticelli *needs* no teaching. He is, by his birth, scholar and gentleman to the heart's core. Christianity itself can only inspire him, not refine him. He is as tried gold chased by the jeweller,—the roughest part of him is the outside.

Now how differently must the newly recovered scholastic learning tell upon these two men. It is all out of Holbein's way; foreign to his nature, useless at the best, probably cumbrous. But Botticelli receives it as a child in later years recovers the forgotten dearness of a nursery tale; and is more himself, and again and again himself, as he breathes the air of Greece, and hears, in his own Italy, the lost voice of the Sibyl murmur again by the Avernus Lake.[3]

156. It is not, as we have seen, every one of the Southern race who can thus receive it. But it graces them

[1] [See above, p. 343.]
[2] [Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 22.]
[3] [Compare Vol. XIII. pp. 132–133.]

all; is at once a part of their being; destroys them, if it is to destroy, the more utterly because it so enters into their natures. It destroys Raphael; but it graces him, and is a part of him. It all but destroys Mantegna; but it graces him. And it does not hurt Holbein, just because it does *not* grace him—never is for an instant a part of him. It is with Raphael as with some charming young girl who has a new and beautifully made dress brought to her, which entirely becomes her,—so much, that in a little while, thinking of nothing else, she becomes *it;* and is only the decoration of her dress. But with Holbein it is as if you brought the same dress to a stout farmer's daughter who was going to dine at the Hall; and begged her to put it on that she might not discredit the company. She puts it on to please you; looks entirely ridiculous in it, but is not spoiled by it,—remains herself, in spite of it.

157. You probably have never noticed the extreme awkwardness of Holbein in wearing this new dress; you would the less do so because his own people think him all the finer for it, as the farmer's wife would probably think her daughter. Dr. Woltmann, for instance, is enthusiastic in praise of the splendid architecture in the background of his Annunciation.[1] A fine mess it must have made in the minds of simple German maidens, in their notion of the Virgin at home! I cannot show you this Annunciation; but I have under my hand one of Holbein's Bible cuts, of the deepest seriousness and import—his illustration of the Canticles, showing the Church as the bride of Christ.

You could not find a subject requiring more tenderness, purity, or dignity of treatment. In this maid, symbolizing the Church, you ask for the most passionate humility, the most angelic beauty: "Behold, thou art fair, my dove."[2]

[1] [See pp. 101, 102 of the book above referred to (p. 326), where a woodcut of the Annunciation is given.]

[2] [Song of Solomon iv. 1: "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks."]

Now here is Holbein's ideal of that fairness; here is his "Church as the Bride."[1]

I am sorry to associate this figure in your minds, even for a moment, with the passages it is supposed to illustrate; but the lesson is too important to be omitted. Remember, Holbein represents the temper of Northern Reformation. He has all the nobleness of that temper, but also all its baseness. He represents, indeed, the revolt of German truth against Italian lies; but he represents also the revolt of German animalism against Hebrew imagination. This figure of Holbein's is half-way from Solomon's mystic bride, to Rembrandt's wife, sitting on his knee while he drinks.[2]

Fig. 7

But the key of the question is not in this. Florentine animalism has at this time, also, enough to say for itself. But Florentine animalism, at this time, feels the joy of a gentleman, not of a churl. And a Florentine, whatever he does,—be it virtuous or sinful, chaste or lascivious, severe or extravagant,—does it with a grace.

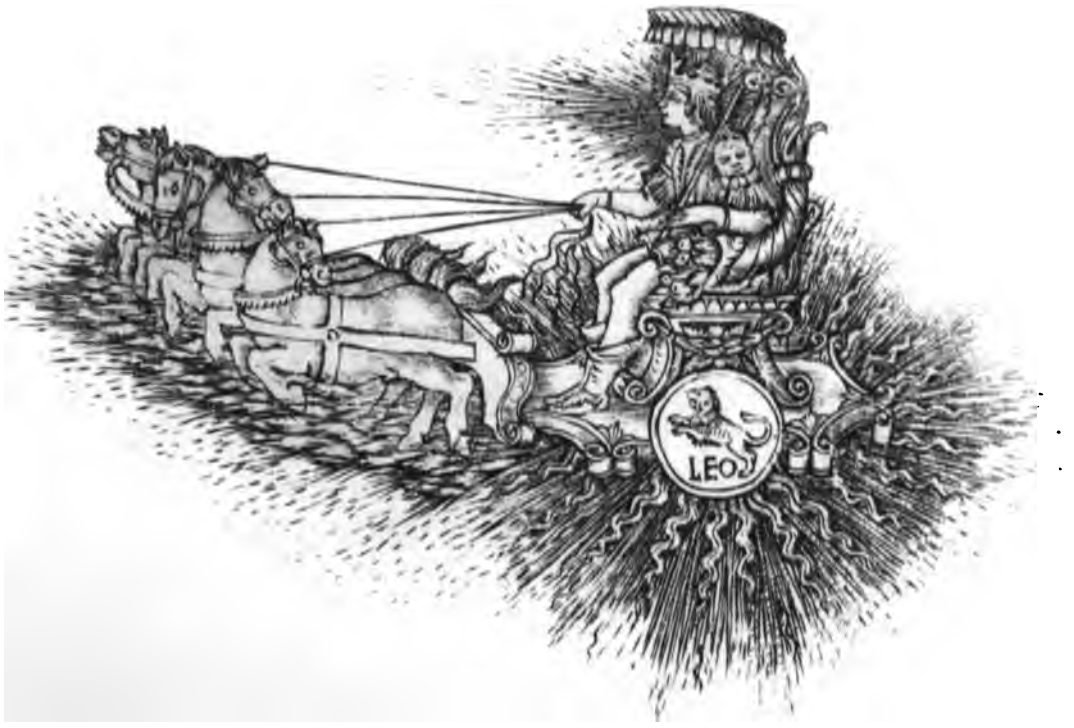
158. You think, perhaps, that Holbein's Solomon's bride is so ungraceful chiefly because she is overdressed, and has too many feathers and jewels. No; a Florentine would have put any quantity of feathers and jewels on her, and yet never lost her grace. You shall see him do it, and that to a fantastic degree, for I have an example under my hand. Look back, first, to Bewick's Venus (Lecture III.).[3] You can't accuse her of being overdressed. She complies with every received modern principle of taste. Sir Joshua's precept that drapery should be "drapery, and nothing more,"[4]

[1] [Fig. 7; taken from the illustrations to the Song of Solomon, in Holbein's series of Old Testament woodcuts, published at Lyons in 1538.]

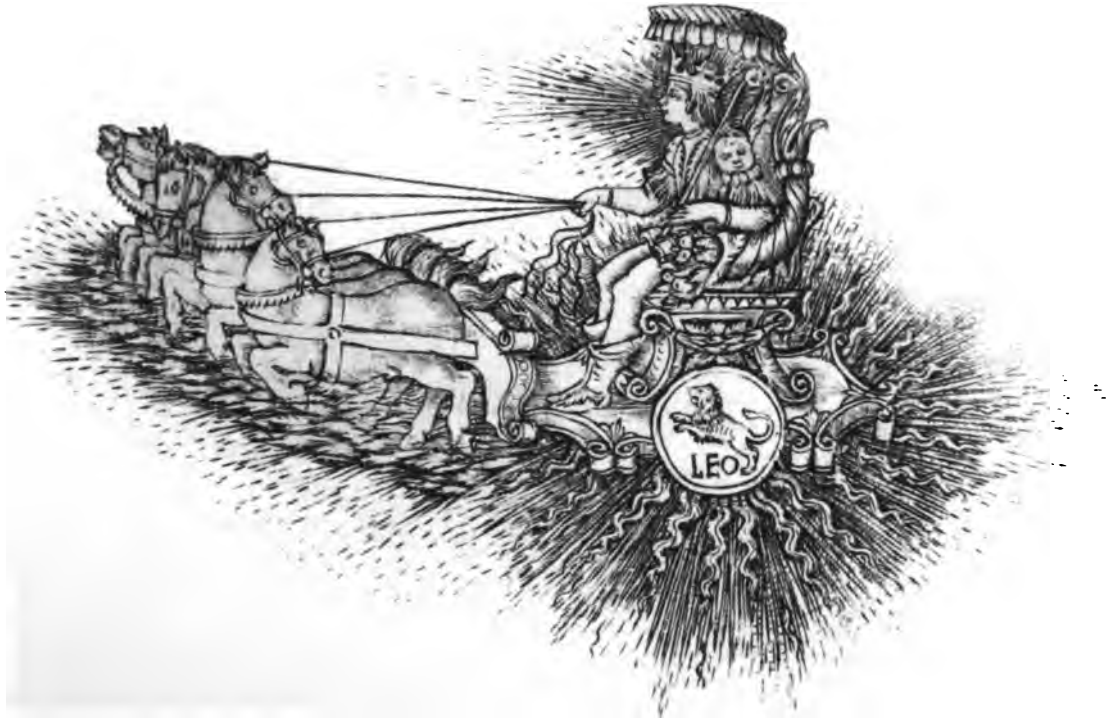
[2] [See Vol. VII. p. 331, and Vol. XIX. p. 110.]

[3] [Plate XXV., p. 363.]

[4] [For this saying, see Vol. XI. p. 417 *n.*; and compare Vol. XII. p. 465.]




"Heat considered as a mode of motion":
Florentine Natural Philosophy.




"Heat considered as a mode of motion":
Florentine Natural Philosophy.

is observed more strictly even by Bewick than by Michael Angelo. If the absence of decoration could exalt the beauty of his Venus, here had been her perfection.

Now look back to Plate XXVI. (Lecture IV.), by Sandro; Venus in her planet, the ruling star of Florence. Anything more grotesque in conception, more unrestrained in fancy of ornament, you cannot find, even in the final days of the Renaissance. Yet Venus holds her divinity through all; she will become majestic to you as you gaze; and there is not a line of her chariot wheels, of her buskins, or of her throne, which you may not see was engraved by a gentleman.

159. Again, Plate XXIX., opposite, is a facsimile of another engraving of the same series[1]—the Sun in Leo. It is even more extravagant in accessories than the Venus. You see the Sun's epaulettes before you see the sun; the spiral scrolls of his chariot, and the black twisted rays of it, might, so far as types of form only are considered, be a design for some modern court-dress star, to be made in diamonds. And yet all this wild ornamentation is, if you will examine it, more purely Greek in spirit than the Apollo Belvidere.

You know I have told you, again and again, that the soul of Greece is her veracity;[2] that what to other nations were fables and symbolisms, to her became living facts—living gods. The fall of Greece was instant when her gods again became fables. The Apollo Belvidere is the work of a sculptor to whom Apollonism is merely an elegant idea on which to exhibit his own skill. He does not himself feel for an instant that the handsome man in the unintelligible attitude,* with drapery hung over his left arm, as it

* I read somewhere, lately, a new and very ingenious theory about the attitude of the Apollo Belvidere, proving, to the author's satisfaction, that the received notion about watching the arrow was all a mistake. The paper

[1] [For particulars of the series, see Introduction, above, p. xxxviii.; and for further references to this plate, see below, p. 461.]

[2] [See *Queen of the Air*, § 169 (Vol. XIX. p. 414); *Lectures on Art*, § 104, and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 200 (Vol. XX. pp. 99, 346–347).]

would be hung to dry over a clothes-line, is the Power of the Sun. But the Florentine believes in Apollo with his whole mind, and is trying to explain his strength in every touch.

For instance; I said just now, "You see the sun's epaulettes before the sun." Well, *don't* you, usually, as it rises? Do you not continually mistake a luminous cloud for it, or wonder where it is, behind one? Again, the face of the Apollo Belvidere is agitated by anxiety, passion, and pride. Is the sun's likely to be so, rising on the evil and the good? This Prince sits crowned and calm: look at the quiet fingers of the hand holding the sceptre,—at the restraint of the reins merely by a depression of the wrist.

160. You have to look carefully for those fingers holding the sceptre, because the hand—which a great anatomist would have made so exclusively interesting—is here confused with the ornamentation of the arm of the chariot on which it rests. But look what the ornamentation is;—fruit and leaves, abundant, in the mouth of a cornucopia. A quite vulgar and meaningless ornament in ordinary renaissance work. Is it so here, think you? Are not the leaves and fruits of earth in the Sun's hand?*

You thought, perhaps, when I spoke just now of the action of the right hand, that less than a depression of the

proved, at all events, one thing—namely, the statement in the text. For an attitude which has been always hitherto taken to mean one thing, and is plausibly asserted now to mean another, must be in itself unintelligible.[1]

* It may be asked, why not corn also? Because that belongs to Ceres, who is equally one of the great gods.

[1] [For earlier references to the Apollo Belvidere, see Vol. V. p. 98 *n*. The first interpretation of the *motif* of the statue was, as Ruskin says, that the god has just discharged an arrow at the Python, and is watching its course and effect; and this is the interpretation petrified in the restoration of the statue in 1532 by Montorsoli. A few years before Ruskin wrote, another theory came into favour, first propounded by Stephani (*Apollo Boedromios*, 1860) and based upon the close resemblance between the statue and a bronze statuette in the Stroganoff Collection at St. Petersburg. In this statuette the god seems to be holding out his ægis in the left hand, apparently to illustrate the *Iliad* (xv. 239, 240), where Zeus lends Apollo his ægis to frighten the Greeks. More recently Furtwaengler has thrown doubts on the authenticity of the bronze statuette, and has suggested a modification of the original theory (see his *Masterpieces of Greek Sculpture*, 1895, pp. 405–412).]

wrist would stop horses such as those. You fancy Botticelli drew them so, because he had never seen a horse; or because, able to draw fingers, he could not draw hoofs! How fine it would be to have, instead, a prancing four-in-hand, in the style of Piccadilly on the Derby-day, or at least horses like the real Greek horses of the Parthenon!

Yes; and if they had had real ground to trot on, the Florentine would have shown you he knew how they should trot. But these have to make their way up the hillside of other lands. Look to the example in your Standard Series, Hermes Eriophoros.[1] You will find his motion among clouds represented precisely in this labouring, failing, half-kneeling attitude of limb. These forms, toiling up through the rippled sands of heaven, are—not horses;—they are clouds themselves, *like* horses, but only a little like. Look how their hoofs lose themselves, buried in the ripples of cloud; it makes one think of the quicksands of Morecambe Bay.

And their tails—what extraordinary tufts of tails, ending in points! Yes; but do you not see, nearly joining with them, what is not a horse tail at all; but a flame of fire, kindled at Apollo's knee? All the rest of the radiance about him shoots *from* him. But this is rendered *up* to him. As the fruits of the earth are in one of his hands, its fire is in the other. And all the warmth, as well as all the light of it, are his.[2]

We had a little natural philosophy, gentlemen, as well as theology, in Florence, once upon a time.

161. Natural philosophy, and also natural art, for in this the Greek reanimate was a nobler creature than the Greek who had died. His art had a wider force and warmer glow. I have told you that the first Greeks were distinguished from the barbarians by their simple humanity; the second Greeks—these Florentine Greeks reanimate—are

[1] [The reference is to the lowest figure in No. 190 in the Reference Series (Vol. XXI. pp. 50, 119). On the name "Eriophoros," see *Queen of the Air*, § 27 (Vol. XIX. p. 322 *n.*). The figure is now shown on a woodcut in *Lectures on Art* (Vol. XX. p. 152).]

[2] [For a corrected interpretation of this portion of the plate, see below, § 228, p. 461.]

human more strongly, more deeply, leaping from the Byzantine death at the call of Christ, "Loose him, and let him go."[1] And there is upon them at once the joy of resurrection, and the solemnity of the grave.

162. Of this resurrection of the Greek, and the form of the tomb he had been buried in those "four days,"[2] I have to give you some account in the last lecture.[3] I will only to-day show you an illustration of it which brings us back to our immediate question as to the reasons why Northern art could not accept classicism. When, in the closing lecture of *Aratra Pentelici*,* I compared Florentine with Greek work, it was to point out to you the eager passions of the first as opposed to the formal legalism and proprieties of the other. Greek work, I told you, while truthful, was also restrained, and never but under majesty of law; while Gothic work was true, in the perfect law of Liberty or Franchise. And now I give you in facsimile[4] the two Aphrodites thus compared—the Aphrodite Thalassia of the Tyrrhene seas, and the Aphrodite Urania of the Greek skies. You may not at first like the Tuscan best; and why she is the best, though both are noble, again I must defer explaining to next lecture.[5] But now turn back to Bewick's Venus, and compare her with the Tuscan Venus of the Stars (Plate XXVI.); and then here with the Tuscan Venus of the Seas, and the Greek Venus of the Sky. Why is the English one vulgar? What is it, in the three others, which makes them, if not beautiful, at least refined?—every one of them "designed" and drawn, indisputably, by a gentleman?[6]

* *Aratra Pentelici*, §§ 181 *seq.* [Vol. XX. pp. 331 *seq.*].

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[1] [John xi. 44.]
[2] [*Ibid.*, 39.]
[3] [See below, pp. 440, 441.]
[4] [A reference to "(Plate VI.)" is here omitted because the illustrations have in this edition been given in a previous volume, where they are more fully discussed: Vol. XX. pp. 334–338, and Plates XIV. and XV.]
[5] [Ruskin, however, finally passed the subject over: see his note on p. 458, below.]
[6] [Compare "The School of Florence," in *Aratra Pentelici*, § 209 (Vol. XX. p. 355).]

I never have been so puzzled by any subject of analysis as, for these ten years, I have been by this. Every answer I give, however plausible it seems at first, fails in some way, or in some cases. But there is the point for you, more definitely put, I think, than in any of my former books;[1]—at present, for want of time, I must leave it to your own thoughts.

168. (II.) The second influence under which engraving developed itself, I said,[2] was that of medicine and the physical sciences. Gentlemen, the most audacious, and the most valuable, statement which I have yet made to you on the subject of practical art, in these rooms, is that of the evil resulting from the study of anatomy.[3] It is a statement so audacious, that not only for some time I dared not make it to you, but for ten years, at least, I dared not make it to myself. I saw, indeed, that whoever studied anatomy was in a measure injured by it; but I kept attributing the mischief to secondary causes. It *can't* be this drink itself that poisons them, I said always. This drink is medicinal and strengthening: I see that it kills them, but it must be because they drink it cold when they have been hot, or they take something else with it that changes it into poison. The drink itself *must* be good. Well, gentlemen, I found out the drink itself to be poison at last, by the breaking of my choicest Venice glass. I could not make out what it was that had killed Tintoret, and laid it long to the charge of chiaroscuro.[4] It was only after my thorough study of his Paradise, in 1870,[5] that I gave up this idea, finding the chiaroscuro, which I had thought exaggerated, was, in all original and undarkened passages,

[1] [See Vol. XX. pp. 355, 356; and compare the incidental references to the Greeks in the chapter on "Vulgarity" in the last volume of *Modern Painters* (Vol. VII. pp. 350, 356).]

[2] [Above, § 149, p. 396.]

[3] [See *Eagle's Nest*, § 159 (above, p. 231), where Ruskin withdraws the statement, made in the *Stones of Venice* (Vol. XI. p. 70), "that anatomical knowledge was helpful to great men." For a collection of his references to the subject, see Vol. IV. p. 155 *n.*]

[4] [See, for instance, the criticisms in Vol. XI. p. 412.]

[5] [See Vol. XX. p. li.]

beautiful and most precious. And then at last I got hold of the true clue: "Il disegno di Michel Agnolo."[1] And the moment I had dared to accuse that, it explained everything; and I saw that the betraying demons of Italian art, led on by Michael Angelo, had been, not pleasure, but knowledge; not indolence, but ambition; and not love, but horror.

164. But when first I ventured to tell you this,[2] I did not know, myself, the fact of all most conclusive for its confirmation. It will take me a little while to put it before you in its total force, and I must first ask your attention to a minor point. In one of the smaller rooms of the Munich Gallery is Holbein's painting of St. Margaret[3] and St. Elizabeth of Hungary,—standard of his early religious work. Here is a photograph from the St. Elizabeth; and, in the same frame, a French lithograph of it. I consider it one of the most important pieces of comparison I have arranged for you,[4] showing you at a glance the difference between true and false sentiment. Of that difference, generally, we cannot speak to-day, but one special result of it you are to observe;—the omission, in the French drawing, of Holbein's daring representation of disease, which is one of the vital honours of the picture. Quite one of the chief strengths of St. Elizabeth, in the Roman Catholic view, was in the courage of her dealing with disease, chiefly leprosy. Now observe, I say *Roman* Catholic view, very earnestly just now; I am not at all sure that it is so in a Catholic view—that is to say, in an eternally Christian and Divine view. And this doubt, very nearly now a certainty, only came clearly into my mind the other day after many and many a year's meditation on it. I had read with great reverence all the beautiful stories about Christ's appearing as

[1] [See *The Relation of Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, § 9 (above, p. 83). The lectures on engraving were *delivered* shortly after that lecture; but the present chapter was not published till four years later (see Bibliographical Note, p. 293).]

[2] [That is, in the lecture just cited (1871).]

[3] [A slip of the pen for St. Barbara: see Plate IV. in Vol. XIX. p. 14.]

[4] [The frame, however, does not remain in the Oxford Collection.]

a leper, and the like;[1] and had often pitied and rebuked myself alternately for my intense dislike and horror of disease. I am writing at this moment within fifty yards of the grave of St. Francis,[2] and the story of the likeness of his feelings to mine had a little comforted me, and the tradition of his conquest of them again humiliated me; and I was thinking very gravely of this, and of the parallel instance of Bishop Hugo of Lincoln, always desiring to do service to the dead, as opposed to my own unmitigated and Louis-Quinze-like horrors of funerals;[3]—when by chance, in the cathedral of Palermo, a new light was thrown for me on the whole matter.

165. I was drawing the tomb of Frederick II.,[4] which is shut off by a grating from the body of the church; and I had, in general, quite an unusual degree of quiet and comfort at my work. But sometimes it was paralyzed by

[1] ["The Churchmen of the times taught that Christ Himself had regarded the leprous with peculiar tenderness; and not content to enforce this lesson from those parts of the evangelic narrative which really confirm it, they advanced, by the aid of the Vulgate, further still, and quoted from the 53rd chapter of Isaiah a prophecy in which, as they maintained, the Messiah himself was foretold under the image of a leper—'nos putavimus eum quasi *leprosum*, percussum a Deo, et humiliatum.' . . . Some time before his betrothment to Poverty, Francis, crossing on horseback the plain which surrounds Assisi, unexpectedly drew near to a leper. Controlling his involuntary disgust, the rider dismounted and advanced to greet and succour him, but the leper instantaneously disappeared. St. Bonaventura is sponsor for the sequel of the tale. He who assumed this deplorable semblance was, in reality, no other than the awful Being whom the typical language of Isaiah had adumbrated" (Sir James Stephen's *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*, 1853, vol. i. pp. 98, 99). In the words "the likeness of his feelings to mine," Ruskin refers to the statement of Celano, in his life of St. Francis, that "even if he chanced to look down from Assisi upon the houses of the lepers in the plain, he would hold his nostrils with his hand, because his horror was so great" (see *The Story of Assisi*, by Lina Duff Gordon, p. 95).]

[2] [In the Sacristan's cell at Assisi, June to July 1874: see Introduction to Vol. XXIII.]

[3] ["To the horror of his attendants, he persisted in visiting the lepers himself; he washed their sores with his own hands, kissed them, prayed over them, and consoled them. . . . He never allowed any one of his priests to bury a corpse if he were within reach. He would allow nothing to interfere with a duty of this kind; and in great cities he would spend whole days by the side of graves" (Froude's *Short Studies:* "A Bishop of the Twelfth Century"). Ruskin refers to Froude's sketch of the life of Bishop Hugo in *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 43 and 88. "Louis XV. had always the kingliest abhorrence of Death . . . avoided the sight of churchyards, funereal monuments, and whatsoever could bring it to mind" (Carlyle's *French Revolution*, book i. ch. iv.). For Ruskin's horror of funerals, see Vol. XVIII. p. 395.]

[4] [The drawing (made in April 1874)—Reference Series, No. 84 (Vol. XXI. p. 84)—is reproduced in the next volume, in *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence*.]

the unconscious interference of one of the men employed in some minor domestic services about the church. When he had nothing to do, he used to come and seat himself near my grating, not to look at my work (the poor wretch had no eyes, to speak of), nor in any way meaning to be troublesome; but there was his habitual seat. His nose had been carried off by the most loathsome of diseases; there were two vivid circles of scarlet round his eyes; and as he sat, he announced his presence every quarter of a minute (if otherwise I could have forgotten it) by a peculiarly disgusting, loud, and long expectoration. On the second or third day, just as I had forced myself into some forgetfulness of him, and was hard at my work, I was startled from it again by the bursting out of a loud and cheerful conversation close to me; and on looking round, saw a lively young fledgling of a priest, seventeen or eighteen years old, in the most eager and spirited chat with the man in the chair. He talked, laughed, and spat, himself, companionably, in the merriest way, for a quarter of an hour; evidently without feeling the slightest disgust, or being made serious for an instant, by the aspect of the destroyed creature before him.

166. His own face was simply that of the ordinary vulgar type of thoughtless young Italians, rather beneath than above the usual standard; and I was certain, as I watched him, that he was not at all my superior, but very much my inferior, in the coolness with which he beheld what was to me so dreadful. I was positive that he could look this man in the face, precisely because he could *not* look, discerningly, at any beautiful or noble thing; and that the reason I dared not, was because I had, spiritually, as much better eyes than the priest, as, bodily, than his companion.

Having got so much of clear evidence given me on the matter, it was driven home for me a week later, as I landed on the quay of Naples.[1] Almost the first thing that

[1] [On May 1, 1874. Compare Vol. XXIII. p. 226 *n.*, where the incident is again mentioned.]

presented itself to me was the sign of a travelling theatrical company, displaying the principal scene of the drama to be enacted on their classical stage. Fresh from the theatre of Taormina, I was curious to see the subject of the Neapolitan popular drama. It was the capture, by the police, of a man and his wife who lived by boiling children. One section of the police was coming in, armed to the teeth, through the passage; another section of the police, armed to the teeth, and with high feathers in its caps, was coming up through a trap-door. In fine dramatic unconsciousness to the last moment, like the clown in a pantomime, the child-boiler was represented as still industriously chopping up a child, pieces of which, ready for the pot, lay here and there on the table in the middle of the picture. The child-boiler's wife, however, just as she was taking the top off the pot to put the meat in, had caught a glimpse of the foremost policeman, and stopped, as much in rage as in consternation.

167. Now it is precisely the same feeling, or want of feeling, in the lower Italian (nor always in the lower classes only) which makes him demand this kind of subject for his secular drama; and the Crucifixion and Pieta for his religious drama. The only part of Christianity he can enjoy is its horror; and even the saint and saintess are not always denying themselves severely, either by the contemplation of torture, or the companionship with disease.

Nevertheless, we must be cautious, on the other hand, to allow full value to the endurance, by tender and delicate persons, of what is really loathsome or distressful to them in the service of others; and I think this picture of Holbein's indicative of the exact balance and rightness of his own mind in this matter, and therefore of his power to conceive a true saint also. He had to represent St. Catherine's[1] chief effort;—he paints her ministering to the sick, and, among them, is a leper; and finding it thus his duty to paint leprosy, he courageously himself studies it from

[1] [A slip of the pen for "St. Elizabeth's."]

the life. Not to insist on its horror; but to assert it, to the needful point of fact, which he does with medical accuracy.

Now here is just a case in which science, in a subordinate degree, is really required for a spiritual and moral purpose. And you find Holbein does not shrink from it even in this extreme case in which it is most painful.

168. If, therefore, you *do* find him in other cases not using it, you may be sure he knew it to be unnecessary.

Now it may be disputable whether in order to draw a living Madonna, one needs to know how many ribs she has; but it would have seemed indisputable that in order to draw a skeleton, one must know how many ribs *it* has.

Holbein is par excellence the draughtsman of skeletons. His painted Dance of Death was, and his engraved Dance of Death is, principal of such things, without any comparison or denial. He draws skeleton after skeleton, in every possible gesture; but never so much as counts their ribs! He neither knows nor cares how many ribs a skeleton has. There are always enough to rattle.

Monstrous, you think, in impudence,—Holbein for his carelessness, and I for defending him! Nay, I triumph in him; nothing has ever more pleased me than this grand negligence. Nobody wants to know how many ribs a skeleton has, any more than how many bars a gridiron has, so long as the one can breathe, and the other broil; and still less, when the breath and the fire are both out.

169. But is it only of the bones, think you, that Holbein is careless?* Nay, incredible though it may seem to you,—but, to me, explanatory at once of much of his excellence,—he did not know anatomy at all! I told you in my Preface, already quoted,† Holbein studies the

* Or inventive! See Woltmann, p. 267. "The shin-bone, or the lower part of the arm, exhibits only one bone, while the upper arm and thigh are often allowed the luxury of two!"

† See *ante*, § 141. The "preface" is that to *The Eagle's Nest* [above, p. 122].

face first, the body secondarily; but I had no idea, myself, how completely he had refused the venomous science of his day. I showed you a dead Christ of his, long ago.[1] Can you match it with your academy drawings, think you? And yet he did not, and would not, know anatomy. *He* would not; but Dürer would, and did:—went hotly into it—wrote books upon it, and upon "proportions of the human body," etc., etc.,[2] and all your modern recipes for painting flesh. How did his studies prosper his art?

People are always talking of his Knight and Death, and his Melancholia,[3] as if those were his principal works. They are his characteristic ones, and show what he might have been *without* his anatomy; but they were mere byeplay compared to his Greater Fortune, and Adam and Eve. Look at these.[4] Here is his full energy displayed; here are both male and female forms drawn with perfect knowledge of their bones and muscles, and modes of action and digestion,—and I hope you are pleased.[5]

But it is not anatomy only that Master Albert studies. He has a taste for optics also; and knows all about refraction and reflection. What with his knowledge of the skull inside, and the vitreous lens outside, if any man in the world is to draw an eye, here's the man to do it, surely! With a hand which can give lessons to John Bellini,[6] and a care which would fain do all so that it can't be done better, and acquaintance with every crack in the cranium, and every humour in the lens,—if we can't draw an eye, we should just like to know who can! thinks Albert.

[1] [*Lectures on Art*, § 150 (Vol. XX. p. 141).]

[2] [For an account of Dürer's MS. "Books of Human Proportions," see Sir Martin Conway's *Literary Remains of Albrecht Dürer*, ch. x.]

[3] [Compare Vol. XXI. pp. 12, 16 (Standard Series, Nos. 4 and 9). The plates are reproduced in Vol. VII. pp. 310, 312.]

[4] [An impression of Dürer's "Greater Fortune" is in the University Galleries: see *Laws of Fésole*, ch. vi. § 32 (Vol. XV. p. 411), and Vol. XIX. p. 260. For the "Adam and Eve," see above, § 128, p. 381.]

[5] [For a note by Ruskin on this passage, see below, p. 480.]

[6] [For the reference here, see Vol. XXI. p. 15.]

So having to engrave the portrait of Melancthon,[1] instead of looking at Melancthon as ignorant Holbein would have been obliged to do,—wise Albert looks at the room window; and finds it has four cross-bars in it, and knows scientifically that the light on Melancthon's eye must be a reflection of the window with its four bars—and engraves it so, accordingly; and who shall dare to say, now, it isn't like Melancthon?

Unfortunately, however, it isn't, nor like any other person in his senses; but like a madman looking at somebody who disputes his hobby. While in this drawing of Holbein's, where a dim grey shadow leaves a mere crumb of white paper,—accidentally it seems, for all the fine scientific reflection,—behold, it is an eye indeed, and of a noble creature.

170. What is the reason? do you ask me; and is all the common teaching about generalization of details true, then?

No; not a syllable of it is true. Holbein is right, not because he draws more generally, but more truly, than Dürer. Dürer draws what he knows is there; but Holbein, only what he sees. And, as I have told you often before, the really scientific artist is he who not only asserts bravely what he *does* see, but confesses honestly what he does *not*.[2] You must not draw all the hairs in an eyelash; not because it is sublime to generalize them, but because it is impossible to see them. How many hairs there are, a sign painter or anatomist may count; but how few of them you can see, it is only the utmost masters, Carpaccio, Tintoret, Reynolds, and Velasquez, who count, or know.

171. Such was the effect, then, of his science upon Dürer's ideal of beauty, and skill in portraiture. What effect had it on the temper and quantity of his work, as compared with poor ignorant Holbein's! You have only three portraits, by Dürer, of the great men of his time,[3] and those bad ones; while he toils his soul out to draw

[1] [The engraved portrait of 1526.]

[2] [See *Eagle's Nest*, §§ 124, 125, 150, 154 (above, pp. 209, 210, 223, 227); and compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 27).]

[3] [Melancthon (§ 169), Erasmus (§ 177), and the Emperor Maximilian.]

the hoofs of satyrs, the bristles of swine, and the distorted aspects of base women and vicious men.[1]

What, on the contrary, has ignorant Holbein done for you? Shakespeare and he divide between them, by word and look, the Story of England under Henry and Elizabeth.

172. Of the effect of science on the art of Mantegna and Marc Antonio (far more deadly than on Dürer's), I must tell you in a future lecture;[2]—the effect of it on their minds, I must partly refer to now, in passing to the third head of my general statement—the influence of new Theology. For Dürer and Mantegna, chiefly because of their science, forfeited their place, not only as painters of men, but as servants of God. Neither of them has left one completely noble or completely didactic picture; while Holbein and Botticelli, in consummate pieces of art, led the way before the eyes of all men, to the purification of their Church and land.

173. (III.) But the need of reformation presented itself to these two men last named on entirely different terms.

To Holbein, when the word of the Catholic Church proved false, and its deeds bloody; when he saw it selling permission of sin in his native Augsburg, and strewing the ashes of its enemies on the pure Alpine waters of Constance,[3] what refuge was there for *him* in more ancient religion? Shall he worship Thor again, and mourn over the death of Balder? He reads Nature in her desolate and narrow truth, and she teaches him the Triumph of Death.

But, for Botticelli, the grand gods are old, are immortal. The priests may have taught falsely the story of the Virgin;—did they not also lie, in the name of Artemis, at Ephesus;—in the name of Aphrodite, at Cyprus?—but shall, therefore, Chastity or Love be dead, or the full moon paler

[1] [See, for instance, the "Prodigal Son," "Effects of Jealousy," the "Five Studies of the Figure," and the "Monstrous Hog" (Nos. 73, 70, and 95 in the British Museum collection of Dürer.]

[2] [This, however, was not done in any published lecture.]

[3] ["Selling permission of sin": through the sale of indulgences and the sanction of usury (see below, p. 438). Eck, the opponent of Luther, had played part in the Diet of Augsburg (1530). For the earlier incident of the "strewing of the ashes" of Jerome of Prague, the disciple of John Huss, see Vol. XI. p. 127.]

over Arno?[1] Saints of Heaven and Gods of Earth!—shall *these* perish because vain men speak evil of them! Let *us* speak good for ever, and grave, as on the rock, for ages to come, the glory of Beauty, and the triumph of Faith.

174. Holbein had bitterer task.

Of old, the one duty of the painter had been to exhibit the virtues of this life, and hopes of the life to come. Holbein had to show the vices of this life, and to obscure the hope of the future. "Yes, we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and fear all evil, for Thou art not with us, and Thy rod and Thy staff comfort us not."[2] He does not choose this task. It is thrust upon him,—just as fatally as the burial of the dead is in a plague-struck city. These are the things he sees, and must speak. He will not become a better artist thereby; no drawing of supreme beauty, or beautiful things, will be possible to him. Yet we cannot say he ought to have done anything else, nor can we praise him specially in doing this. It is his fate; the fate of all the bravest in that day.

175. For instance, there is no scene about which a shallow and feeble painter would have been more sure to adopt the commonplaces of the creed of his time than the death of a child,[3]—chiefly, and most of all, the death of a country child,—a little thing fresh from the cottage and the field. Surely for such an one, angels will wait by its sick bed, and rejoice as they bear its soul away; and over its shroud flowers will be strewn, and the birds will sing by its grave. So your common sentimentalist would think, and paint. Holbein sees the facts, as they verily are, up to the point when vision ceases. He speaks, then, no more.

The country labourer's cottage—the rain coming through its roof, the clay crumbling from its partitions, the fire

[1] [Here the reference is to the representation of Venus on the plate "The Star of Florence" (p. 368). The priests had lied about Artemis in the story of St. Paul at Ephesus (Acts xix.); and lied at Cyprus in proclaiming Aphrodite the goddess of wanton love. But by Botticelli, Ruskin argues, she was represented as the goddess of chaste love.]

[2] [See Psalms xxiii. 4.]

[3] [Fig. 8.]

*Fig.* 8

**The Child's Bedtime**

**(Facsimile from Holbein's Woodcut)**

*Fig.* 9

**"He that hath Ears to Hear, let him Hear"**

**(Facsimile from Holbein's Woodcut)**

lighted with a few chips and sticks on a raised piece of the mud floor,—such daïs as can be contrived, for use, not for honour. The damp wood sputters; the smoke, stopped by the roof, though the rain is not, coils round again, and down. But the mother can warm the child's supper of bread and milk so—holding the pan by the long handle; and on mud floor though it be, they are happy,—she, and her child, and its brother,—if only they could be left so. They shall not be left so: the young thing must leave them—will never need milk warmed for it any more. It would fain stay,—sees no angels—feels only an icy grip on its hand, and that it cannot stay. Those who loved it shriek and tear their hair in vain, amazed in grief. "Oh, little one, must you lie out in the fields then, not even under this poor torn roof of thy mother's to-night?"

176. Again: there was not in the old creed any subject more definitely and constantly insisted on than the death of a miser. He had been happy, the old preachers thought, till then: but his hour has come; and the black covetousness of hell is awake and watching; the sharp harpy claws will clutch his soul out of his mouth, and scatter his treasure for others. So the commonplace preacher and painter taught. Not so Holbein. The devil want to snatch his soul, indeed! Nay, he never *had* a soul, but of the devil's giving. His misery to begin on his deathbed! Nay, he had never an unmiserable hour of life. The fiend is with him now,—a paltry, abortive fiend, with no breath even to blow hot with. He supplies the hell-blast *with a machine*.[1] It is winter, and the rich man has his furred cloak and cap, thick and heavy; the beggar, bare-headed to beseech him, skin and rags hanging about him together, touches his shoulder, but all in vain; there is other business in hand. More haggard than the beggar himself, wasted and palsied,

[1] [Fig. 9: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matthew xi. 15). The woodcut is of "Death and the Miser" in the "Dance of Death" Series. Compare Ruskin's description of the design in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 53. The head of the miser is No. 73 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 81).]

the rich man counts with his fingers the gain of the years to come.

But of those years, infinite that are to be, Holbein says nothing. "I know not; I see not. This only I see, on this very winter's day, the low pale stumbling-block at your feet, the altogether by you unseen and forgotten Death. You shall not pass *him* by on the other side; here is a fasting figure in skin and bone, at last, that will stop you; and for all the hidden treasures of earth, here is your spade: dig now, and find them."

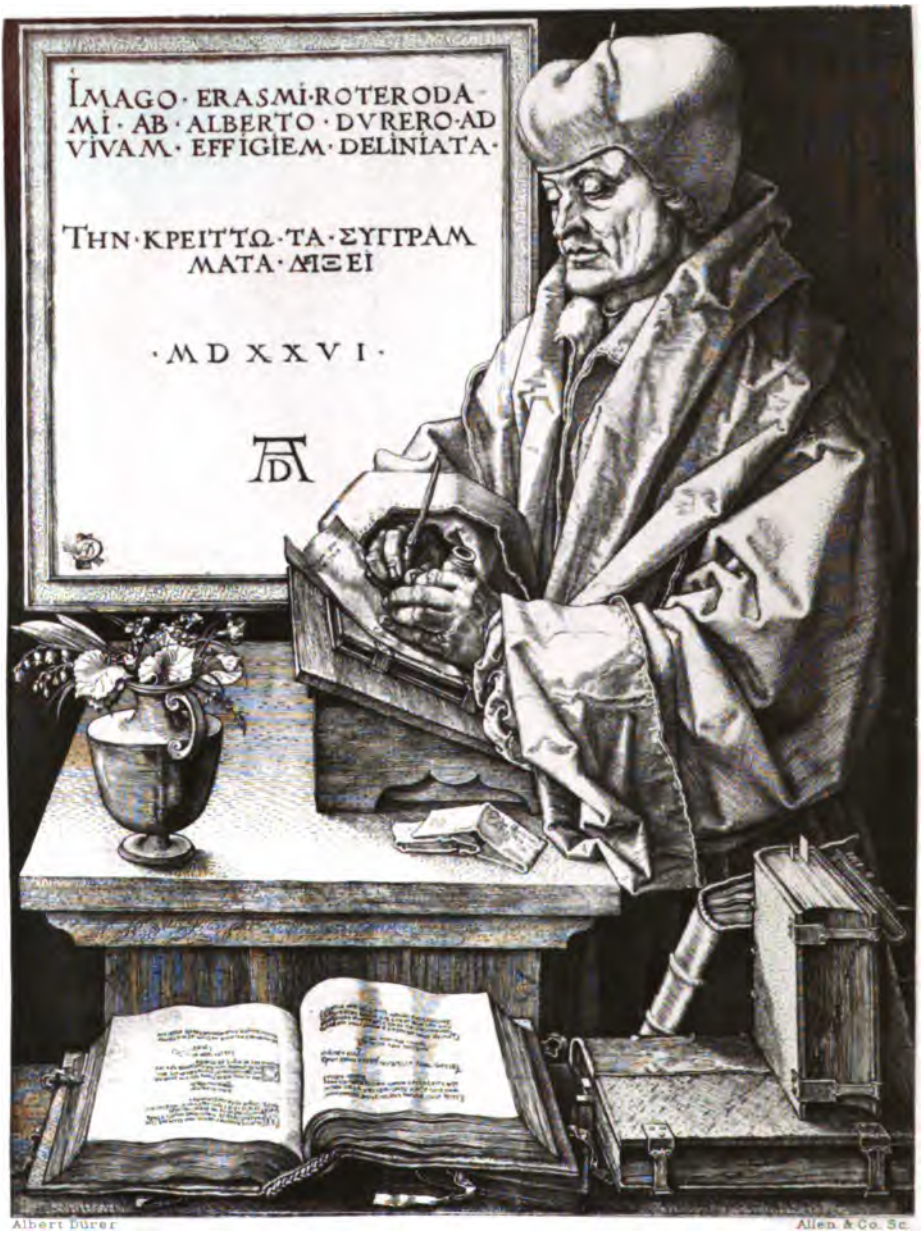
177. I have said that Holbein was condemned to teach these things. He was not happy in teaching them, nor thanked for teaching them. Nor was Botticelli for his lovelier teaching. But they both could do no otherwise. They lived in truth and steadfastness; and with both, in their marvellous design, veracity is the beginning of invention, and love its end.

I have but time to show you, in conclusion, how this affectionate self-forgetfulness protects Holbein from the chief calamity of the German temper, vanity,[1] which is at the root of all Dürer's weakness. Here is a photograph of Holbein's portrait of Erasmus, and a fine proof of Dürer's.[2] In Holbein's, the face leads everything; and the most lovely qualities of the face lead in that. The cloak and cap are perfectly painted, just because you look at them neither more nor less than you would have looked at the cloak in reality. You don't say, "How brilliantly they are touched," as you would with Rembrandt; nor "How gracefully they are neglected," as you would with Gainsborough; nor "How exquisitely they are shaded," as you would with Leonardo; nor "How grandly they are composed," as you would with Titian. You say only, "Erasmus is surely there; and what a pleasant sight!" You don't think of Holbein at all. He has not even put in the minutest

[1] [Compare Vol. IX. p. 229, and Vol. XI. p. 180 *n.*]

[2] [Plates XXXVI. and XXXVII. Holbein's picture is in the Louvre (No. 2178). Dürer's is here reproduced from the example in the British Museum.]

Holbein's Erasmus




Dürer's Erasmus

letter H, that I can see, to remind you of him. Drops his H's, I regret to say, often enough. "My hand should be enough for you; what matters my name?" But now, look at Dürer's. The very first thing you see, and at any distance, is this great square tablet with

"The image of Erasmus, drawn from the life by Albert Dürer, 1526,"

and a great straddling A.D. besides. Then you see a cloak, and a table, and a pot, with flowers in it, and a heap of books with all their leaves and all their clasps, and all the little bits of leather gummed in to mark the places; and last of all you see Erasmus's face; and when you do see it, the most of it is wrinkles.

All egotism and insanity, this, gentlemen. Hard words to use; but not too hard to define the faults which rendered so much of Dürer's great genius abortive, and to this day paralyze, among the details of a lifeless and ambitious precision, the student, no less than the artist, of German blood. For too many an Erasmus, too many a Dürer, among them, the world is all cloak and clasp, instead of face or book; and the first object of their lives is to engrave their initials.

178. For us, in England, not even so much is at present to be hoped; and yet, singularly enough, it is more our modesty, unwisely submissive, than our vanity, which has destroyed our English school of engraving.

At the bottom of the pretty line engravings which used to represent, characteristically, our English skill, one saw always *two* inscriptions. At the left-hand corner, "Drawn by—so-and-so"; at the right-hand corner, "Engraved by—so-and-so." Only under the worst and cheapest plates—for the Stationers' Almanack, or the like—one saw sometimes, "Drawn and engraved by—so-and-so," which meant nothing more than that the publisher would not go to the expense of an artist, and that the engraver haggled through as he could. (One fortunate exception, gentlemen, you have in the old drawings for your Oxford Almanack, though the

publishers, I have no doubt, even in that case, employed the cheapest artist they could find.*) But in general, no engraver thought himself able to draw; and no artist thought it his business to engrave.

179. But the fact that this and the following lecture are on the subject of design in engraving, implies of course that in the work we have to examine, it was often the engraver himself who designed, and as often the artist who engraved.

And you will observe that the only engravings which bear imperishable value are, indeed, in this kind. It is true that, in wood-cutting, both Dürer and Holbein, as in our own days Leech and Tenniel, have workmen under them who can do all they want. But in metal cutting it is not so. For, as I have told you,[1] in metal cutting, ultimate perfection of Line has to be reached; and it can be reached by none but a master's hand; nor by his, unless in the very moment and act of designing. Never, unless under the vivid first force of imagination and intellect, can the Line have its full value. And for this high reason, gentlemen, that paradox[2] which perhaps seemed to you so daring, is nevertheless deeply and finally true, that while a woodcut may be laboriously finished, a grand engraving on metal must be comparatively incomplete. For it must be done, throughout, with the full fire of temper in it, visibly governing its lines, as the wind does the fibres of cloud.

180. The value hitherto attached to Rembrandt's etchings,[3] and others imitating them, depends on a true instinct

* The drawings were made by Turner, and are now among the chief treasures of the Oxford Galleries. I ought to add some notice of Hogarth to this lecture in the Appendix;[4] but fear I shall have no time: besides, though I have profound respect for Hogarth, as, in literature, I have for Fielding,[5] I can't criticize them, because I know nothing of their subjects.

[1] [Above, p. 370.]
[2] [See above, § 77, p. 349.]
[3] [See above, § 82, p. 352.]
[4] [This was not done; for Ruskin's incidental allusions to Hogarth, see General index.]
[5] [For Ruskin's appreciation of Fielding, see Vol. XIV. p. 279.]

in the public mind for this virtue of line. But etching is an indolent and blundering method at the best;[1] and I do not doubt that you will one day be grateful for the severe disciplines of drawing required in these schools, in that they will have enabled you to know what a line may be, driven by a master's chisel on silver or marble, following, and fostering as it follows, the instantaneous strength of his determined thought.

[1] [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 64 (Vol. XIX. p. 112).]

# LECTURE VI

## DESIGN IN THE FLORENTINE SCHOOLS OF ENGRAVING

181. In the first of these lectures,[1] I stated to you their subject, as the investigation of the engraved work of a group of men, to whom engraving, as a means of popular address, was above all precious, because their art was distinctively didactic.

Some of my hearers must be aware that, of late years, the assertion that art should be didactic has been clamorously and violently derided by the countless crowd of artists who have nothing to represent, and of writers who have nothing to say; and that the contrary assertion—that art consists only in pretty colours and fine words,—is accepted, readily enough, by a public which rarely pauses to look at a picture with attention, or read a sentence with understanding.

182. Gentlemen, believe me, there never was any great advancing art yet, nor can be, without didactic purpose. The leaders of the strong schools are, and must be always, either teachers of theology, or preachers of the moral law. I need not tell you that it was as teachers of theology on the walls of the Vatican that the masters with whose names you are most familiar obtained their perpetual fame. But however great their fame, you have not practically, I imagine, ever been materially assisted in your preparation for the schools either of philosophy or divinity by Raphael's "School of Athens," by Raphael's "Theology,"—or by Michael Angelo's "Judgment." My task, to-day, is to

[1] [See above, pp. 305, 324.]

set before you some part of the design of the first Master of the works in the Sistine Chapel; and I believe that, from his teaching, you will, even in the hour which I ask you now to give, learn what may be of true use to you in all your future labour, whether in Oxford or elsewhere.

183. You have doubtless, in the course of these lectures, been occasionally surprised by my speaking of Holbein and Sandro Botticelli, as Reformers,[1] in the same tone of respect, and with the same implied assertion of their intellectual power and agency, with which it is usual to speak of Luther and Savonarola. You have been accustomed, indeed, to hear painting and sculpture spoken of as supporting or enforcing Church doctrine; but never as reforming or chastising it. Whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, you have admitted what in the one case you held to be the abuse of painting in the furtherance of idolatry,—in the other, its amiable and exalting ministry to the feebleness of faith. But neither has recognized,—the Protestant his ally, —or the Catholic his enemy, in the far more earnest work of the great painters of the fifteenth century. The Protestant was, in most cases, too vulgar to understand the aid offered to him by painting; and in all cases too terrified to believe in it. He drove the gift-bringing Greek[2] with imprecations from his sectarian fortress, or received him within it only on the condition that he should speak no word of religion there.

184. On the other hand, the Catholic, in most cases too indolent to read, and, in all, too proud to dread, the rebuke of the reforming painters, confused them with the crowd of his old flatterers, and little noticed their altered language or their graver brow. In a little while, finding they had ceased to be amusing, he effaced their works, not as dangerous, but as dull; and recognized only thenceforward, as art, the innocuous bombast of Michael Angelo, and fluent efflorescence

[1] [See above, pp. 328, 353, 364, 395.]
[2] ["Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes" (Virgil, *Æn.* ii. 49).]

of Bernini.[1] But when you become more intimately and impartially acquainted with the history of the Reformation, you will find that, as surely and earnestly as Memling and Giotto strove in the north and south to set forth and exalt the Catholic faith, so surely and earnestly did Holbein and Botticelli strive, in the north, to chastise, and, in the south, to revive it. In what manner, I will try to-day briefly to show you.

185. I name these two men as the reforming leaders: there were many, rank and file, who worked in alliance with Holbein; with Botticelli, two great ones, Lippi and Perugino. But both of these had so much pleasure in their own pictorial faculty, that they strove to keep quiet, and out of harm's way,—involuntarily manifesting themselves sometimes, however; and not in the wisest manner. Lippi's running away with a novice[2] was not likely to be understood as a step in Church reformation correspondent to Luther's marriage.* Nor have Protestant divines, even to this day, recognized the real meaning of the reports of

* The world was not then ready for Le Père Hyacinthe;[3]—but the real gist of the matter is that Lippi did, openly and bravely, what the highest prelates in the Church did basely and in secret; also he loved, where they

[1] [For another reference to Bernini, see Vol. XIII. p. 520.]

[2] [Compare what Ruskin says on this subject in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 22. Fra Filippo Lippi, while engaged on painting the frescoes of the Duomo at Prato, was appointed Chaplain to the Convent of Santa Margherita. Here he became enamoured of one of the nuns, Lucrezia Buti, and having persuaded the abbess to let Lucrezia sit to him for a study of the Madonna, he carried her off to his house. She remained with him for two years, and bore him a son, the painter Filippino Lippi. Ultimately the Pope issued a Bull, releasing them from their vows and sanctioning their marriage. Much documentary and contemporary evidence has come to light about Lippi since Ruskin wrote, and it is hardly of a commendatory character, though some of it may well be prejudiced, as Ruskin suggests in his note here (see "Fra Filippo Lippi," by J. A. Crowe, in *The Nineteenth Century*, October 1896).

Ruskin had "discovered" Lippi in 1870, as we have seen (Vol. XX. pp. lii., liii., and compare Vol. V. p. 87 *n.*); and thenceforth references to the painter become frequent in his works. See, for instance, *Lectures on Landscape*, § 64, and *Eagle's Nest*, § 229 (above, pp. 50, 277); *Val d'Arno*, §§ 67, 267; *Mornings in Florence*, § 46 *n.*; *Guide to the Venetian Academy*; *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*, § 23; *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 59, 62, 64, 66, 69, 72, 74; and *Præterita*, ii. § 126. See also the Index to the Oxford Catalogues (Vol. XXI.). For an earlier reference to Lippi, see Vol. IV. p. 189 *n.*]

[3] [Charles Loyson, called Père Hyacinthe, born 1827; Priest, 1851; a Carmelite, and a Parisian preacher. Married, 1872, and founded a "Gallican" congregation, Paris, 1879. He sometimes addressed meetings at Oxford, where Ruskin had met him.]

Perugino's "infidelity."[1] Botticelli, the pupil of the one, and the companion of the other, held the truths they taught him through sorrow as well as joy; and he is the greatest of the reformers, because he preached without blame; though the least known, because he died without victory.

I had hoped to be able to lay before you some better biography of him than the traditions of Vasari, of which I gave a short abstract some time back in *Fors Clavigera;*[2] but as yet I have only added internal evidence to the popular story, the more important points of which I must review briefly. I will read you,—instead of merely giving you reference to,—the passages in sequence on which I have to comment.[3]

186. "His father, Mariano Filipepi, a Florentine citizen, brought him up with care, and caused him to be instructed in all such things as are usually taught to children before they choose a calling. But although the boy readily acquired whatever he wished to learn, yet was he constantly discontented; neither would he take any pleasure in reading, writing, or accounts, insomuch that the father, disturbed by the eccentric habits of his son, turned him over in despair to a gossip of his, called Botticello, who was a goldsmith, and considered a very competent master of his art, to the intent that the boy might learn the same."

only lusted; and he has been proclaimed therefore by them—and too foolishly believed by us—to have been a shameful person. Of his true life, and the colours given to it, we will try to learn something tenable, before we end our work in Florence.[4]

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[1] ["Pietro (Perugino) possessed but very little religion, and could never be made to believe in the immortality of the soul; nay, most obstinately did he reject all good counsel, with words suited to the stubbornness of his marble-hard brain" (Vasari's *Lives*, vol. ii. p. 324, Bohn's edition).]

[2] [Letter 22.]

[3] [Ruskin quotes from Bohn's edition of Vasari, vol. ii. pp. 230 *seq.*]

[4] [Ruskin, however, did not return to the subject. Instead of "Of his true life . . . our work in Florence," he originally wrote:—

> "But here is his portrait old. Here is a shadow of his work—here a copy of a piece of it. If, even with this poor evidence, you can still think evil of him, for my part you are welcome."

The portrait of Lippi is in his picture of the "Coronation of the Virgin" (see below, p. 428); a "shadow of his work" was the photograph of the "Annunciation"; and the "copy of a piece of it," Ruskin's study (No. 100 in the Educational Series): see Vol. XXI. p. 84.]

"He took no pleasure in reading, writing, nor accounts"! You will find the same thing recorded of Cimabue;[1] but it is more curious when stated of a man whom I cite to you as typically a gentleman and a scholar. But remember, in those days, though there were not so many entirely correct books issued by the Religious Tract Society for boys to read, there were a great many more pretty things in the world for boys to see. The Val d'Arno was Pater-noster Row to purpose; their Father's Row, with books of His writing on the mountain shelves. And the lad takes to looking at things, and thinking about them, instead of reading about them,—which I commend to you also, as much the more scholarly practice of the two. To the end, though he knows all about the celestial hierarchies, he is not strong in his letters, nor in his dialect. I asked Mr. Tyrwhitt to help me through with a bit of his Italian the other day. Mr. Tyrwhitt could only help me by suggesting that it was "Botticelli for so-and-so." And one of the minor reasons which induce me so boldly to attribute these sibyls to him, instead of Baldini,[2] is that the lettering is so ill done. The engraver would assuredly have had his lettering all right,—or at least neat. Botticelli blunders through it, scratches impatiently out when he goes wrong: and as I told you there's no repentance in the engraver's trade,[3] leaves all the blunders visible.

187. I may add one fact bearing on this question lately communicated to me.* In the autumn of 1872 I possessed myself of an Italian book of pen drawings,[4] some, I have no doubt, by Mantegna in his youth, others by Sandro himself. In examining these, I was continually struck by the

* I insert supplementary notes, when of importance, in the text of the lecture, for the convenience of the general reader.

[1] ["Cimabue, instead of devoting himself to letters, consumed the whole day in drawing men, horses, houses, and other various fancies" (Vasari, vol. i. p. 35).]

[2] [On this subject, see the Introduction (above, p. xxxviii.).]

[3] [See above, § 37, p. 323.]

[4] [The "Florentine Picture Chronicle," now ascribed to Maso Finiguerra: see Vol. XV. p. 380 *n.*; and compare the Introduction (above, pp. xxxviii.–xxxix.). The drawing of Helen and Paris is No. 57.]

comparatively feeble and blundering way in which the titles were written, while all the rest of the handling was really superb; and still more surprised when, on the sleeves and hem of the robe of one of the principal figures of women ("Helena rapita da Paris"), I found what seemed to be meant for inscriptions, intricately embroidered; which nevertheless, though beautifully drawn, I could not read. In copying Botticelli's *Zipporah*[1] this spring, I found the border of her robe wrought with characters of the same kind, which a young painter, working with me, who already knows the minor secrets of Italian art better than I,* assures me are letters,—and letters of a language hitherto undeciphered.

188. "There was at that time a close connexion and almost constant intercourse between the goldsmiths and the painters, wherefore Sandro, who possessed considerable ingenuity, and was strongly disposed to the arts of design, became enamoured of painting, and resolved to devote himself entirely to that vocation. He acknowledged his purpose at once to his father; and the latter, who knew the force of his inclination, took him accordingly to the Carmelite monk, Fra Filippo, who was a most excellent painter of that time, with whom he placed him to study the art, as Sandro himself had desired. Devoting himself thereupon entirely to the vocation he had chosen, Sandro so closely followed the directions, and imitated the manner, of his master, that Fra Filippo conceived a great love for him, and instructed him so effectually, that Sandro rapidly attained to such a degree in art as none would have predicted for him."

I have before pointed out to you the importance of training by the goldsmith.[2] Sandro got more good of it, however, than any of the other painters so educated,—being enabled by it to use gold for light to colour, in a glowing

* Mr. Charles F. Murray.[3]

[1] [See the frontispiece to Vol. XXIII.]
[2] [See above, § 123, p. 377.]
[3] [See Vol. XXI. p. 299 *n.*]

harmony never reached with equal perfection, and rarely attempted, in the later schools. To the last, his paintings are partly treated as work in niello; and he names himself, in perpetual gratitude, from this first artisan master.[1] Nevertheless, the fortunate fellow finds, at the right moment, another, even more to his mind, and is obedient to him through his youth, as to the other through his childhood. And this master loves him; and instructs him "so effectually,"—in grinding colours, do you suppose, only; or in laying of lines only; or in anything more than these?

189. I will tell you what Lippi must have taught any boy whom he loved. First, humility, and to live in joy and peace, injuring no man—if such innocence might be. Nothing is so manifest in every face by him, as its gentleness and rest. Secondly, to finish his work perfectly, and in such temper that the angels might say of it—not he himself—"Iste perfecit opus."[2] Do you remember what I told you in the *Eagle's Nest*, that true humility was in hoping that angels might sometimes admire *our* work;[3] not in hoping that we should ever be able to admire *theirs?* Thirdly,—a little thing it seems, but was a great one,—love of flowers. No one draws such lilies or such daisies as Lippi. Botticelli beat him afterwards in roses, but never in lilies. Fourthly, due honour for classical tradition. Lippi is the only religious painter who dresses John Baptist in the camelskin, as the Greeks dressed Heracles in the lion's—over the head.[4] Lastly, and chiefly of all,—Le Père Hyacinthe taught his pupil certain views about the doctrine of the Church, which the boy thought of more deeply than his tutor, and that by a great deal; and Master Sandro presently got himself into such question for painting heresy,[5]

[1] [See above, § 65, p. 341.]

[2] [The inscription on a scroll in Lippi's "Coronation of the Virgin," now in the Accademia at Florence; a photograph of it is No. 101 in the Reference Series (Vol. XXI. p. 36).]

[3] [See above, p. 159.]

[4] [Compare *Eagle's Nest*, § 229 (above, p. 277).]

[5] [The reference is to the picture of "The Assumption of the Virgin," which Botticelli painted for Matteo Palmieri, and which, according to Vasari (vol. ii. p. 233, Bohn), was impugned for heresy: see the note on the picture (No. 1126)

that if he had been as hot-headed as he was true-hearted, he would soon have come to bad end by the tar-barrel. But he is so sweet and so modest, that nobody is frightened; so clever, that everybody is pleased: and at last, actually the Pope sends for him to paint his own private chapel,—where the first thing my young gentleman does, mind you, is to paint the devil in a monk's dress, tempting Christ![1] The sauciest thing, out and out, done in the history of the Reformation, it seems to me; yet so wisely done, and with such true respect otherwise shown for what was sacred in the Church, that the Pope didn't mind: and all went on as merrily as marriage bells.

190. I have anticipated, however, in telling you this, the proper course of his biography, to which I now return.

"While still a youth he painted the figure of Fortitude, among those pictures of the Virtues which Antonio and Pietro Pollaiuolo were executing in the Mercatanzia, or Tribunal of Commerce, in Florence.[2] In Santo Spirito, a church of the same city, he painted a picture for the chapel of the Bardi family: this work he executed with great diligence, and finished it very successfully, depicting certain olive and palm trees therein with extraordinary care."[3]

It is by a beautiful chance that the first work of his, specified by his Italian biographer, should be the Fortitude.* Note also what is said of his tree drawing.

"Having, in consequence of this work, obtained much credit and reputation, Sandro was appointed by the Guild

* Some notice of this picture is given at the beginning of my third Morning in Florence, "Before the Soldan."

in E. T. Cook's *Popular Handbook to the National Gallery*. Some modern critics believe that Vasari in ascribing this work to Botticelli confused him with Francesco Botticini.]

[1] [This refers to the fresco in the Sistine Chapel, known as "The Entrance on His Ministry by Christ" or "The Temptation of Christ" (No. 8 in the list in § 209 below). On the left, under the shade of olive trees, is seen Satan, disguised as a Franciscan friar, tempting Christ.]

[2] [Now, with the other Virtues mentioned, in the Uffizi at Florence: see *Mornings in Florence*, §§ 30, 38.]

[3] [The "Bardi" Madonna is now in the Berlin Gallery (No. 106).]

of Porta Santa Maria to paint a picture in San Marco, the subject of which is the Coronation of Our Lady, who is surrounded by a choir of angels—the whole extremely well designed, and finished by the artist with infinite care.[1] He executed various works in the Medici Palace for the elder Lorenzo, more particularly a figure of Pallas on a shield wreathed with vine branches, whence flames are proceeding: this he painted of the size of life.[2] A San Sebastiano was also among the most remarkable of the works executed for Lorenzo.[3] In the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, in Florence, is a Pietà, with small figures, by this master: this is a very beautiful work.[4] For different houses in various parts of the city Sandro painted many pictures of a round form, with numerous figures of women undraped. Of these there are still two examples at Castello, a villa of the Duke Cosimo,—one representing the birth of Venus, who is borne to earth by the Loves and Zephyrs; the second also presenting the figure of Venus crowned with flowers by the Graces: she is here intended to denote the Spring, and the allegory is expressed by the painter with extraordinary grace."[5]

Our young Reformer enters, it seems, on a very miscellaneous course of study; the Coronation of Our Lady; St. Sebastian; Pallas in vine-leaves; and Venus,—without fig-leaves. Not wholly Calvinistic, Fra Filippo's teaching seems to have been! All the better for the boy—being such a boy as he was: but I cannot in this lecture enter farther into my reasons for saying so.

191. Vasari, however, has shot far ahead in telling us of this picture of the Spring, which is one of Botticelli's completest works. Long before he was able to paint

[1] [Now in the Accademia at Florence.]

[2] [This work, now lost, was painted for Giuliano's banner at the great tournament of 1475: see A. Streeter's *Botticelli*, 1903, p. 11.]

[3] [This picture is in the Berlin Gallery (No. 1128).]

[4] [Possibly the picture in the Munich Gallery (No. 1010).]

[5] ["The Birth of Venus" is in the Uffizi; for another reference to it, see *Præterita*, ii. § 29. The "Spring" is in the Accademia at Florence; an engraving of a study of one of the heads by Ruskin is given in Vol. XXIII.]

Greek nymphs, he had done his best in idealism of greater spirits; and, while yet quite a youth, painted, at Castello, the Assumption of Our Lady, with "the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, the evangelists, the martyrs, the confessors, the doctors, the virgins, and the hierarchies!"[1]

Imagine this subject proposed to a young (or even old) British Artist, for his next appeal to public sensation at the Academy! But do you suppose that the young British artist is wiser and more civilized than Lippi's scholar, because his only idea of a patriarch is of a man with a long beard; of a doctor, the M.D. with the brass plate over the way; and of a virgin, Miss —— of the —— theatre?

Not that even Sandro was able, according to Vasari's report, to conduct the entire design himself. The proposer of the subject assisted him; and they made some modifications in the theology, which brought them both into trouble —so early did Sandro's innovating work begin, into which subjects our gossiping friend waives unnecessary inquiry, as follows.

"But although this picture is exceedingly beautiful, and ought to have put envy to shame, yet there were found certain malevolent and censorious persons who, not being able to affix any other blame to the work, declared that Matteo and Sandro had erred gravely in that matter, and had fallen into grievous heresy.

"Now, whether this be true or not, let none expect the judgment of that question from me: it shall suffice me to note that the figures executed by Sandro in that work are entirely worthy of praise; and that the pains he took in depicting those circles of the heavens must have been very great, to say nothing of the angels mingled with the other figures, or of the various foreshortenings, all which are designed in a very good manner.

"About this time Sandro received a commission to paint

[1] [Vasari, vol. ii. p. 233 (Bohn). The picture is No. 1126 in the National Gallery: see above, pp. 428–429 *n.*]

a small picture with figures three parts of a braccio high,—the subject an Adoration of the Magi.[1]

"It is indeed a most admirable work; the composition, the design, and the colouring are so beautiful that every artist who examines it is astonished; and, at the time, it obtained so great a name in Florence, and other places, for the master, that Pope Sixtus IV. having erected the chapel built by him in his palace at Rome, and desiring to have it adorned with paintings, commanded that Sandro Botticelli should be appointed Superintendent of the work."

192. Vasari's words, "about this time," are evidently wrong. It must have been many and many a day after he painted Matteo's picture that he took such high standing in Florence as to receive the mastership of the works in the Pope's chapel at Rome. Of his position and doings there, I will tell you presently; meantime, let us complete the story of his life.

"By these works Botticelli obtained great honour and reputation among the many competitors who were labouring with him, whether Florentines or natives of other cities, and received from the Pope a considerable sum of money; but this he consumed and squandered totally, during his residence in Rome, where he lived without due care, as was his habit."

193. Well, but one would have liked to hear *how* he squandered his money, and whether he was without care—of other things than money.

It is just possible, Master Vasari, that Botticelli may have laid out his money at higher interest than you know of; meantime, he is advancing in life and thought, and becoming less and less comprehensible to his biographer. And at length, having got rid, somehow, of the money he received from the Pope; and finished the work he had to do, and uncovered it,—free in conscience, and empty in purse, he returned to Florence, where, "being a sophistical

[1] [Now in the Uffizi (No. 1286).]

person, he made a comment on a part of Dante, and drew the Inferno, and put it in engraving, in which he consumed much time; and not working for this reason, brought infinite disorder into his affairs."[1]

194. Unpaid work, this engraving of Dante, you perceive,—consuming much time also, and not appearing to Vasari to be work at all. It is but a short sentence, gentlemen,—this, in the old edition of Vasari, and obscurely worded,—a very foolish person's contemptuous report of a thing to him totally incomprehensible. But the thing itself is out-and-out the most important fact in the history of the religious art of Italy. I can show you its significance in not many more words than have served to record it.

Botticelli had been painting in Rome; and had expressly chosen to represent there,—being Master of Works, in the presence of the Defender of the Faith,—the foundation of the Mosaic law; to his mind the Eternal Law of God,—that law of which modern Evangelicals sing perpetually their own original psalm, "Oh, how hate I Thy law! it is my abomination all the day."[2] Returning to Florence, he reads Dante's vision of the Hell created by its violation. He knows that the pictures he has painted in Rome cannot be understood by the people; they are exclusively for the best trained scholars in the Church. Dante, on the other hand, can only be read in manuscript; but the people could and would understand *his* lessons, if they were pictured in accessible and enduring form. He throws all his own lauded work aside,—all for which he is most honoured, and in which his now matured and magnificent skill is as easy to him as singing to a perfect musician. And he sets himself to a servile and despised labour,—his friends mocking him, his resources failing him, infinite "disorder" getting into his affairs—of this world.

195. Never such another thing happened in Italy any

[1] [Botticelli's illustrations of the *Divina Commedia* (formerly in the Duke of Hamilton's collection) are now in the Berlin Museum.]

[2] [See Psalms cxix. 97.]

more. Botticelli engraved her Pilgrim's Progress for her, putting himself in prison to do it. She would not read it when done. Raphael and Marc Antonio were the theologians for her money.[1] Pretty Madonnas, and satyrs with abundance of tail,—let our pilgrim's progress be in *these* directions, if you please.

Botticelli's own pilgrimage, however, was now to be accomplished triumphantly, with such crowning blessings as Heaven might grant to him. In spite of his friends and his disordered affairs, he went his own obstinate way; and found another man's words worth engraving as well as Dante's; not without perpetuating, also, what he deemed worthy of his own.

196. What would that be, think you? His chosen works before the Pope in Rome?—his admired Madonnas in Florence?—his choirs of angels and thickets of flowers? Some few of these—yes, as you shall presently see; but "the best attempt of this kind from his hand is the Triumph of Faith, by Fra Girolamo Savonarola, of Ferrara, of whose sect our artist was so zealous a partisan that he totally abandoned painting, and not having any other means of living, he fell into very great difficulties. But his attachment to the party he had adopted increased; he became what was then called a Piagnone, or Mourner, and abandoned all labour; insomuch that, finding himself at length become old, being also very poor, he must have died of hunger had he not been supported by Lorenzo de' Medici, for whom he had worked at the small hospital of Volterra and other places, who assisted him while he lived, as did other friends and admirers of his talents."[2]

197. In such dignity and independence—having employed his talents not wholly at the orders of the dealer—died, a poor bedesman of Lorenzo de' Medici, the President

[1] [See Catalogue of the Standard Series, No. 15 (Vol. XXI. p. 19).]

[2] [Vasari, vol. ii. p. 235 (Bohn). The "Triumph of Faith" was published in 1516, and the only figured engraving it contains—the frontispiece—is thought by modern critics to bear little resemblance to Botticelli's style. With § 196 here compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 22.]

of that high academy of art in Rome, whose Academicians were Perugino, Ghirlandajo, Angelico, and Signorelli;[1] and whose students, Michael Angelo and Raphael.

"A worthless, ill-conducted fellow on the whole," thinks Vasari, "with a crazy fancy for scratching on copper."

Well, here are some of the scratches for you to see; only, first, I must ask you seriously for a few moments to consider what the two powers were, which, with this iron pen of his, he has set himself to reprove.

198. Two great forms of authority reigned over the entire civilized world, confessedly, and by name, in the Middle Ages. They reign over it still, and must for ever, though at present very far from confessed; and, in most places, ragingly denied.

The first power is that of the Teacher, or true Father; the Father "in God." It may be—happy the children to whom it is so—that of the actual father also;—whose parents have been their tutors. But, for the most part, it will be some one else who teaches them, and moulds their minds and brain. All such teaching, when true, being from above, and coming down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning,[2] is properly that of the holy Catholic "ἐκκλησία," council, church, or papacy, of many fathers in God, not of one. Eternally powerful and divine; revered of all humble and lowly scholars, in Jewry, in Greece, in Rome, in Gaul, in England, and beyond sea, from Arctic zone to zone.

The second authority is the power of National Law, enforcing justice in conduct by due reward and punishment, Power vested necessarily in magistrates capable of administering it with mercy and equity; whose authority, be it of many or few, is again divine, as proceeding from the King of kings, and was acknowledged, throughout civilized Christendom, as the power of the Holy Empire, or Holy Roman Empire, because first throned in Rome; but it is

[1] [Compare § 208, below, p. 441.]
[2] [James i. 17.]

for ever also acknowledged, namelessly, or by name, by all loyal, obedient, just, and humble hearts, which truly desire that, whether for them or against them, the eternal equities and dooms of Heaven should be pronounced and executed; and as the wisdom or word of their Father should be taught, so the will of their Father should be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.[1]

199. You all here know what contention first, and then what corruption and dishonour, had paralyzed these two powers before the days of which we now speak. Reproof, and either reform or rebellion, became necessary everywhere. The northern Reformers, Holbein, and Luther, and Henry, and Cromwell, set themselves to their task rudely, and, it might seem, carried it through. The southern Reformers, Dante, and Savonarola, and Botticelli, set hand to their task reverently, and, it seemed, did not by any means carry it through. But the end is not yet.[2]

200. Now I shall endeavour to-day to set before you the art of Botticelli, especially as exhibiting the modesty of great imagination trained in reverence, which characterized the southern Reformers; and as opposed to the immodesty of narrow imagination, trained in self-trust, which characterized the northern Reformers.

"The modesty of great *imagination;*" that is to say, of the power which conceives all things in true relation, and not only as they affect ourselves. I can show you this most definitely by taking one example of the modern, and unschooled temper, in Bewick;* and setting it beside Botticelli's treatment of the same subject of thought,—namely, the meaning of war, and the reforms necessary in the carrying on of war.

* I am bitterly sorry for the pain which my partial references to the man whom of all English artists whose histories I have read, I most esteem, have given to one remaining member of his family. I hope my meaning may be better understood after she has seen the close of this lecture.

[1] [Matthew vi. 10.]
[2] [Matthew xxiv. 6.]

201. Both the men are entirely at one in their purpose. They yearn for peace and justice to rule over the earth, instead of the sword; but see how differently they will say what is in their hearts to the people they address. To Bewick, war was more an absurdity than it was a horror: he had not seen battle-fields, still less had he read of them, in ancient days. He cared nothing about heroes,—Greek, Roman, or Norman. What he knew, and saw clearly, was that Farmer Hodge's boy went out of the village one holiday afternoon, a fine young fellow, rather drunk, with a coloured riband in his hat; and came back, ten years afterwards, with one leg, one eye, an old red coat, and a tobacco-pipe in the pocket of it. That is what he has got to say, mainly. So, for the pathetic side of the business, he draws you two old soldiers meeting as bricklayers' labourers; and for the absurd side of it, he draws a stone, sloping sideways with age, in a bare field, on which you can just read, out of a long inscription, the words "glorious victory"; but no one is there to read them,—only a jackass, who uses the stone to scratch himself against.[1]

202. Now compare with this Botticelli's reproof of war.[2] *He* had seen it, and often; and between noble persons;—knew the temper in which the noblest knights went out to it;—knew the strength, the patience, the glory, and the grief of it. He would fain see his Florence in peace; and yet he knows that the wisest of her citizens are her bravest soldiers. So he seeks for the ideal of a soldier, and for the greatest glory of war, that in the presence of these he may speak reverently, what he must speak. He does not go to Greece for his hero. He is not sure that even her patriotic wars were always right. But, by his religious faith, he cannot doubt the nobleness of the soldier who put the children of Israel in possession of their promised land, and to whom the sign of the consent of heaven was given by

[1] [The description is of two woodcuts in Bewick's *Birds*, vol. i. (1797) p. 87, and vol. ii. (1804), vignette to introduction. See in a later volume Ruskin's Notes on the *Birds*.]

[2] [Plate XXX.; compare § 246, below, p. 477.]

its pausing light in the valley of Ajalon.[1] Must then setting sun and risen moon stay, he thinks, only to look upon slaughter? May no soldier of Christ bid them stay otherwise than so? He draws Joshua, but quitting his hold of the sword: its hilt rests on his bent knee; and he kneels before the sun, not commands it; and this is his prayer:—

"Oh, King of kings, and Lord of lords, who alone rulest always in eternity, and who correctest all our wanderings,—Giver of melody to the choir of the angels, listen Thou a little to our bitter grief, and come and rule us, oh Thou highest King, with Thy love which is so sweet!"[2]

Is not that a little better, and a little wiser, than Bewick's jackass? Is it not also better, and wiser, than the sneer of modern science? "What great men are we! —we, forsooth, can make almanacs, and know that the earth turns round. Joshua indeed! Let us have no more talk of the old-clothesman."[3]

All Bewick's simplicity is in that; but none of Bewick's understanding.

208. I pass to the attack made by Botticelli upon the guilt of wealth. So I had at first written; but I should rather have written, the appeal made by him against the cruelty of wealth, then first attaining the power it has maintained to this day.

The practice of receiving interest had been confined, until this fifteenth century, with contempt and malediction,[4] to the profession, so styled, of usurers, or to the Jews. The merchants of Augsburg introduced it as a convenient and pleasant practice among Christians also; and insisted that it was decorous and proper even among respectable merchants. In the view of the Christian Church of their day, they might more reasonably have set themselves to

[1] [Joshua x. 12. On this subject see *The Nature and Authority of Miracle*, § 2, and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 66.]

[2] [A translation of the inscription under Plate XXX.]

[3] ["Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel" (Zechariah iii. 3).]

[4] [On this subject, compare Vol. XVI. p. 169; Vol. XVII. pp. 220, 221, 271.]

"Obediente Domino voci hominis"

defend adultery.* However, they appointed Dr. John Eck, of Ingoldstadt, to hold debates in all possible universities, at their expense, on the allowing of interest; and as these Augsburgers had in Venice their special mart, Fondaco, called of the Germans, their new notions came into direct collision with old Venetian ones, and were much hindered by them, and all the more, because, in opposition to Dr John Eck, there was preaching on the other side of the Alps. The Franciscans, poor themselves, preached mercy to the poor: one of them, Brother Marco of San Gallo, planned the "Mount of Pity" for their defence, and the merchants of Venice set up the first in the world, against the German Fondaco. The dispute burned far on towards our own times. You perhaps have heard before of one Antonio, a merchant of Venice,[1] who persistently retained the then obsolete practice of lending money gratis, and of the peril it brought him into with the usurers. But you perhaps did not before know why it was the flesh, or heart of flesh, in him, that they so hated.

204. Against this newly risen demon of authorized usury, Holbein and Botticelli went out to war together. Holbein, as we have partly seen in his designs for the Dance of Death,[2] struck with all his soldier's strength.† Botticelli uses neither satire nor reproach. He turns altogether away from the criminals; appeals only to heaven for defence against them. He engraves the design which, of all his work, must have cost him hardest toil in its execution,[3] —the Virgin praying to her Son in heaven for pity upon

* Read Ezekiel xviii.

† See also the account by Dr. Woltmann of the picture of the Triumph of Riches. *Holbein and his Time*, p. 352.

[1] [For other references in the same sense to *The Merchant of Venice* (Act i. sc. 3, "He lends out money gratis"), see *Munera Pulveris*, §§ 100, 134 (Vol. XVII. pp. 223, 257), and *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 53 and 76.]

[2] [See above, p. 417.]

[3] [The engraving here described—"The Preaching of Fra Marco di Monte Santa Maria in Gallo" (near Ancona)—is an early Italian print (fully described in Ottley's *History of Engraving*, vol. i. pp. 425–428), and may be seen in the British Museum. The "building of the Mount of Pity" and the "group of two small figures" from it are engraved as frontispiece to *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 22.]

the poor: "For these are also my children."* Underneath, are the seven works of Mercy; and in the midst of them, the building of the Mount of Pity: in the distance lies Italy, mapped in cape and bay, with the cities which had founded mounts of pity,—Venice in the distance, chief. Little seen, but engraved with the master's loveliest care, in the background there is a group of two small figures—the Franciscan brother kneeling, and an angel of Victory crowning him.

205. I call it an angel of Victory, observe, with assurance; although there is no legend claiming victory, or distinguishing this angel from any other of those which adorn with crowns of flowers the nameless crowds of the blessed. For Botticelli has other ways of speaking than by written legends. I know by a glance at this angel that he has taken the action of it from a Greek coin;[1] and I know also that he had not, in his own exuberant fancy, the least need to copy the action of any figure whatever. So I understand, as well as if he spoke to me, that he expects me, if I am an educated gentleman, to recognize this particular action as a Greek angel's; and to know that it is a temporal victory which it crowns.

206. And now farther, observe, that this classical learning of Botticelli's, received by him, as I told you,[2] as a native element of his being, gives not only greater dignity and gentleness, but far wider range, to his thoughts of Reformation. As he asks for pity from the cruel Jew to the *poor* Gentile, so he asks for pity from the proud Christian to the *untaught* Gentile. Nay, for more than pity, for fellowship, and acknowledgment of equality before God. The learned men of his age in general brought back the Greek mythology as anti-Christian. But Botticelli and Perugino, as pre-Christian; nor only as pre-Christian, but as the foundation of Christianity. But chiefly Botticelli, with perfect grasp of the Mosaic and classic theology,

* These words are engraved in the plate, as spoken by the Virgin.

[1] [See the figures on the coins of Syracuse in *Aratra Pentelici* (Vol. XX. p. 351).]
[2] [See above, p. 400.]

thought over and seized the harmonies of both; and he it was who gave the conception of that great choir of the prophets and sibyls, of which Michael Angelo, more or less ignorantly borrowing it in the Sistine Chapel, in great part lost the meaning, while he magnified the aspect.[1]

207. For, indeed, all Christian and heathen mythology had alike become to Michael Angelo only a vehicle for the display of his own powers of drawing limbs and trunks: and having resolved, and made the world of his day believe, that all the glory of design lay in variety of difficult attitude, he flings the naked bodies about his ceiling with an upholsterer's ingenuity of appliance to the corners they could fit, but with total absence of any legible meaning. Nor do I suppose that one person in a million, even of those who have some acquaintance with the earlier masters, takes patience in the Sistine Chapel to conceive the original design. But Botticelli's mastership of the works evidently was given to him as a theologian, even more than as a painter; and the moment when he came to Rome to receive it, you may hold for the crisis of the Reformation in Italy. The main effort to save her priesthood was about to be made by her wisest Reformer,—face to face with the head of her Church,—not in contest with him, but in the humblest subjection to him; and in adornment of his own chapel for his own delight, and more than delight, if it might be.

208. Sandro brings to work, not under him, but with him, the three other strongest and worthiest men he knows, Perugino, Ghirlandajo, and Luca Signorelli. There is evidently entire fellowship in thought between Botticelli and Perugino. They two together plan the whole; and Botticelli, though the master, yields to Perugino the principal place, the end of the chapel, on which is to be the Assumption of the Virgin. It was Perugino's favourite subject,[2]

[1] [Ruskin's change of view about Michael Angelo, discussed in the Introduction (p. xxxii.), appears very markedly on a comparison of this passage with *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 317).]

[2] [See, for instance, the well-known picture in the Accademia at Florence (referred to in Vol. IV. p. 84 *n.*), and the painting in the church of the Annunziata (see above, p. xxviii.).]

done with his central strength; assuredly the crowning work of his life, and of lovely Christian art in Europe.

Michael Angelo painted it out, and drew devils and dead bodies all over the wall instead. But there remains to us, happily, the series of subjects designed by Botticelli to lead up to this lost one.

209. He came, I said, not to attack, but to restore the Papal authority. To show the power of inherited honour, and universal claim of divine law, in the Jewish and Christian Church,—the law delivered first by Moses; then, in final grace and truth, by Christ.

He designed twelve great pictures, each containing some twenty figures the size of life, and groups of smaller ones scarcely to be counted. Twelve pictures,—six to illustrate the giving of the law by Moses; and six the ratification and completion of it by Christ. Event by event, the jurisprudence of each dispensation is traced from dawn to close in this correspondence.[1]

1. Covenant of Circumcision.
2. Entrance on his Ministry by Moses.
3. Moses by the Red Sea.
4. Delivery of Law on Sinai.
5. Destruction of Korah.
6. Death of Moses.
7. Covenant of Baptism.
8. Entrance on His Ministry by Christ.
9. Peter and Andrew by the Sea of Galilee.
10. Sermon on Mount.
11. Giving Keys to St. Peter.
12. Last Supper.

Of these pictures, Sandro painted three himself, Perugino three, and the Assumption; Ghirlandajo one, Signorelli one,

[1] [The first series are on the left of the altar. No. 1 is by Pinturicchio. No. 2 by Botticelli (see the note on Zipporah, below, § 257, p. 486). No. 3 by Piero di Cosimo. No. 4 by Cosimo Rosselli. No. 5 by Botticelli. The authorship of No. 6 is doubtful (Ruskin ascribes it to Signorelli). Then, on the right of the altar (No. 1 facing and foreshadowing No. 7, and so on), No. 7 is by Pinturicchio. No. 8 by Botticelli. No. 9 by Domenico Ghirlandajo. No. 10 by Cosimo Rosselli. No. 11 by Perugino, and No. 12 by Cosimo Rosselli. Such is the now generally accepted ascription. Ruskin, it will be seen, gives to Cosimo Rosselli the one commonly attributed to Piero di Cosimo, and to Perugino the two commonly attributed to Pinturicchio.]

and Rosselli four.* I believe that Sandro intended to take the roof also, and had sketched out the main succession of its design; and that the prophets and sibyls which he meant to paint, he drew first small, and engraved his drawings afterwards, that some part of the work might be, at all events, thus communicable to the world outside of the Vatican.

210. It is not often that I tell you my beliefs; but I am forced here, for there are no dates to found more on. Is it not wonderful that among all the infinite mass of fool's thoughts about the "majestic works of Michael Angelo" in the Sistine Chapel, no slightly more rational person has ever asked what the chapel was first meant to be like, and how it was to be roofed?

Nor can I assure myself, still less you, that all these prophets and sibyls are Botticelli's.[1] Of many there are two engravings, with variations: some are inferior in parts, many altogether. He signed none; never put grand tablets with "S. B." into his skies;[2] had other letters than those to engrave, and no time to spare. I have chosen out of the series three of the sibyls, which have, I think, clear internal evidence of being his; and these you shall compare with Michael Angelo's. But first I must put you in mind what the sibyls were.

211. As the prophets represent the voice of God in man, the sibyls represent the voice of God in nature. They are properly all forms of one sibyl, Διὸς Βουλὴ,[3] the counsel of God; and the chief one, at least in the Roman mind, was the Sibyl of Cumae. From the traditions of her, the

* Cosimo Rosselli, especially chosen by the Pope for his gay colouring.[4]

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[1] [On this subject, see the Introduction (above, p. xxxviii.).]

[2] [Compare what Ruskin says of Dürer's signature, above (§ 177, p. 419).]

[3] [See Liddell and Scott, *s.* Σίβυλλα, where the authorities for this derivation are given, and it is explained that earlier writers only recognise one Sibyl.]

[4] [For Vasari's story, which, however, is that the Pope gave the prize to Rosselli for his gay colouring when the pictures were completed, see the Life of that painter in vol. ii. p. 176 (Bohn).]

Romans, and we through them, received whatever lessons the myth, or fact, of sibyl power has given to mortals.

How much have you received, or may you yet receive, think you, of that teaching? I call it the myth, or fact; but remember that, *as* a myth, it *is* a fact.[1] This story has concentrated whatever good there is in the imagination or visionary powers in women, inspired by nature only. The traditions of witch and gipsy are partly its offshoots. You despise both, perhaps. But can you, though in utmost pride of your supreme modern wisdom, suppose that the character—say, even of so poor and far-fallen a sibyl as Meg Merrilies[2]—is only the coinage of Scott's brain; or that, even being no more, it is valueless? Admit the figure of the Cumaean Sibyl, in like manner, to be the coinage only of Virgil's brain. As such, it, and the words it speaks, are yet facts in which we may find use, if we are reverent to them.

To me, personally (I must take your indulgence for a moment to speak wholly of myself), they have been of the truest service—quite material and indisputable.

I am writing on St. John's Day,[3] in the monastery of Assisi; and I had no idea whatever, when I sat down to my work this morning, of saying any word of what I am now going to tell you. I meant only to expand and explain a little what I said in my lecture about the Florentine engraving. But it seems to me now that I had better tell you what the Cumaean Sibyl has actually done for me.

212. In 1871, partly in consequence of chagrin at the Revolution in Paris, and partly in great personal sorrow, I was struck by acute inflammatory illness at Matlock, and reduced to a state of extreme weakness; lying at one time unconscious for some hours, those about me having no hope

[1] [On this point, compare *Mornings in Florence*, §§ 40, 63.]

[2] [For other references to the gipsy in *Guy Mannering*, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 97; *Pleasures of England*, § 98; and *Præterita*, ii. § 233.]

[3] [St. John Baptist's Day, June 24. Ruskin was at Assisi, going backwards and forwards from Rome, for several weeks in 1874.]

of my life.[1] I have no doubt that the immediate cause of the illness was simply, eating when I was not hungry; so that modern science would acknowledge nothing in the whole business but an extreme and very dangerous form of indigestion; and entirely deny any interference of the Cumaean Sibyl in the matter.

I once heard a sermon by Dr. Guthrie, in Edinburgh, upon the wickedness of fasting.[2] It was very eloquent and ingenious, and finely explained the superiority of the Scotch Free Church to the benighted Catholic Church, in that the Free Church saw no merit in fasting. And there was no mention, from beginning to end of the sermon, of even the existence of such texts as Daniel i. 12, or Matthew vi. 16.[3]

Without the smallest merit, I admit, in fasting, I was nevertheless reduced at Matlock to a state very near starvation; and could not rise from my pillow, without being lifted, for some days. And in the first clearly pronounced stage of recovery, when the perfect powers of spirit had returned, while the body was still as weak as it well could be, I had three dreams, which made a great impression on me; for in ordinary health my dreams are supremely ridiculous, if not unpleasant; and in ordinary conditions of illness, very ugly, and always without the slightest meaning. But these dreams were all distinct and impressive, and had much meaning, if I chose to take it.

218. The first* was of a Venetian fisherman, who wanted me to follow him down into some water which I

* I am not certain of their order at this distance of time.

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[1] [The "great personal sorrow" (see also § 214, below) is that which is alluded to, at a later stage in the story, in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 49. "Those about him" at the time were Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Severn, Lady Mount Temple, and Mr. Albert Goodwin (see W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, 1900, pp. 279–280 *n.*). Dr. Acland attended him.]

[2] [In 1853: see Vol. VI. p. 483 and *n.*]

[3] ["Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days, and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink." "Moreover, when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance."]

thought was too deep; but he called me on, saying he had something to show me; so I followed him; and presently, through an opening, as if in the arsenal wall, he showed me the bronze horses of St. Mark's, and said, "See, the horses are putting on their harness."[1]

The second was of a preparation at Rome, in St. Peter's (or a vast hall as large as St. Peter's), for the exhibition of a religious drama. Part of the play was to be a scene in which demons were to appear in the sky; and the stage servants were arranging grey fictitious clouds, and painted fiends, for it, under the direction of the priests. There was a woman dressed in black, standing at the corner of the stage watching them, having a likeness in her face to one of my own dead friends; and I knew somehow that she was not that friend, but a spirit; and she made me understand, without speaking, that I was to watch, for the play would turn out other than the priests expected. And I waited; and when the scene came on, the clouds became real clouds, and the fiends real fiends, agitating them in slow quivering, wild and terrible, over the heads of the people and priests. I recollected distinctly, however, when I woke, only the figure of the black woman mocking the people, and of one priest in an agony of terror, with the sweat pouring from his brow, but violently scolding one of the stage servants for having failed in some ceremony, the omission of which, he thought, had given the devils their power.

The third dream was the most interesting and personal. Some one came to me to ask me to help in the deliverance of a company of Italian prisoners who were to be ransomed for money. I said I had no money. They answered, Yes, I had some that belonged to me as a brother of St. Francis, if I would give it up. I said I did not know even that I *was* a brother of St. Francis; but I thought to myself that perhaps the Franciscans of Fésole, whom I had

[1] [For another reference to this dream, see *St. Mark's Rest*, § 99.]

helped to make hay in their field in 1845,[1] had adopted me for one; only I didn't see how the consequence of that would be my having any money. However, I said they were welcome to whatever I had; and then I heard the voice of an Italian woman singing; and I have never heard such divine singing before nor since;—the sounds absolutely strong and real, and the melody altogether lovely. If I could have written it! But I could not even remember it when I woke,—only how beautiful it was.

214. Now these three dreams have, every one of them, been of much use to me since; or so far as they have failed to be useful, it has been my own fault, and not theirs; but the chief use of them at the time was to give me courage and confidence in myself, both in bodily distress, of which I had still not a little to bear; and worse, much mental anxiety about matters supremely interesting to me, which were turning out ill. And through all such trouble—which came upon me as I was recovering, as if it meant to throw me back into the grave,—I held out and recovered, repeating always to myself, or rather having always murmured in my ears, at every new trial, one Latin line,

"Tu ne cede malis, sed contra fortior ito."[2]

Now I had got this line out of the tablet in the engraving of Raphael's vision,[3] and had forgotten where it came from. And I thought I knew my sixth book of Virgil so well, that I never looked at it again while I was giving these lectures at Oxford, and it was only here at Assisi, the other day, wanting to look more accurately at the first scene by the lake Avernus, that I found I had been saved by the words of the Cumaean Sibyl.

215. "Quam tua te Fortuna sinet," the completion of

[1] [See Vol. IV. p. 352 and *n.*]

[2] [Virgil: *Æneid*, vi. 95:—

"Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito,
Quam tua te Fortuna sinet."]

[3] [A plate by Marc Antonio; so called, as it is supposed to be after Raphael.]

the sentence, has yet more and continual teaching in it for me now; as it has for all men. Her opening words, which have become hackneyed, and lost all present power through vulgar use of them, contain yet one of the most immortal truths ever yet spoken for mankind; and they will never lose their power of help for noble persons. But observe, both in that lesson, "Facilis descensus Averni," etc.;[1] and in the still more precious, because universal, one on which the strength of Rome was founded,—the burning of the books,[2]—the Sibyl speaks only as the voice of Nature, and of her laws;—not as a divine helper, prevailing over death; but as a mortal teacher warning us against it, and strengthening us for our mortal time; but not for eternity. Of which lesson her own history is a part, and her habitation by the Avernus lake. She desires immortality, fondly and vainly, as we do ourselves. She receives, from the love of her *refused* lover, Apollo, not immortality, but length of life;—her years to be as the grains of dust in her hand.[3] And even this she finds was a false desire; and her wise and holy desire at last is—to die. She wastes away; becomes a shade only, and a voice. The Nations ask her, What wouldst thou? She answers, Peace; only let my last words be true. "L'ultimo mie parlar sie verace."[4]

216. Therefore, if anything is to be conceived, rightly, and chiefly, in the form of the Cumaean Sibyl, it must be of fading virginal beauty, of enduring patience, of far-looking into futurity. "For after my death there shall yet return," she says, "another virgin."

> "Jam redit et virgo;—redeunt Saturnia regna,
> Ultima Cumaei venit jam carminis aetas."[5]

Here then is Botticelli's Cumaean Sibyl.[6] She is armed,

[1] [*Æneid*, vi. 126.]
[2] [See Aulus Gellius, i. 19.]
[3] [For the story of the Cumaean Sibyl, see also Vol. XIII. p. 132.]
[4] [The first line of the Italian inscription under the engraving, Plate XXXI.]
[5] [Virgil: *Eclogues*, iv. 4, 5, but Ruskin transposes the lines.]
[6] [Plate XXXI.; for another reference to it, see above, § 149, p. 396.]

For a time, and times

Michael Angelo

The Nymph beloved of Apollo

**The Nymph beloved of Apollo**

for she is the prophetess of Roman fortitude;—but her faded breast scarcely raises the corselet; her hair floats, not falls, in waves like the currents of a river,—the sign of enduring life; the light is full on her forehead: she looks into the distance as in a dream. It is impossible for art to gather together more beautifully or intensely every image which can express her true power, or lead us to understand her lesson.

217. Now you do not, I am well assured, know one of Michael Angelo's sibyls from another: unless perhaps the Delphian, whom of course he makes as beautiful as he can. But of this especially Italian prophetess, one would have thought he might, at least in some way, have shown that he knew the history, even if he did not understand it. She might have had more than one book, at all events, to burn. She might have had a stray leaf or two fallen at her feet. He could not indeed have painted her only as a voice; but his anatomical knowledge need not have hindered him from painting her virginal youth, or her wasting and watching age, or her inspired hope of a holier future.

218. Opposite,[1]—fortunately, photograph from the figure itself, so that you can suspect me of no exaggeration,—is Michael Angelo's Cumaean Sibyl, wasting away. It is by a grotesque and most strange chance that he should have made the figure of this Sibyl, of all others in the chapel, the most fleshly and gross, even proceeding to the monstrous licence of showing the nipples of the breast as if the dress were moulded over them like plaster. Thus he paints the poor nymph beloved of Apollo,—the clearest and queenliest in prophecy and command of all the sibyls,—as an ugly crone, with the arms of Goliath, poring down upon a single book.

219. There is one point of fine detail, however, in Botticelli's Cumaean Sibyl, and in the next I am going to

[1] [Plate XXXII.; from a photograph of the painting on one of the spaces between the windows of the Sistine Chapel.]

show you, to explain which I must go back for a little while to the question of the direct relation of the Italian painters to the Greek. I don't like repeating in one lecture what I have said in another; but to save you the trouble of reference, must remind you of what I stated in my fourth lecture on Greek birds,[1] when we were examining the adoption of the plume crests in armour, that the crest signifies command; but the diadem, *obedience;* and that every crown is primarily a diadem. It is the thing that binds, before it is the thing that honours.

Now all the great schools dwell on this symbolism. The long flowing hair is the symbol of life, and the διάδημα of the law restraining it. Royalty, or kingliness, over life, restraining and glorifying. In the extremity of restraint—in death, whether noble, as of death to Earth, or ignoble, as of death to Heaven, the διάδημα is fastened with the mort-cloth: "Bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and the face bound about with the napkin."[2]

220. Now look back to the first Greek head I ever showed you, used as the type of archaic sculpture in *Aratra Pentelici*,[3] and then look at the crown in Botticelli's Astrologia. It is absolutely the Greek form,—even to the peculiar oval of the forehead; while the diadem—the governing law—is set with appointed stars—to rule the destiny and thought. Then return to the Cumaean Sibyl. She, as we have seen, is the symbol of enduring life—almost immortal. The diadem is withdrawn from the forehead—reduced to a narrow fillet—here, and the hair thrown free.

221. From the Cumaean Sibyl's diadem, traced only by points, turn to that of the Hellespontic (Plate XXXIII., opposite). I do not know why Botticelli chose her for the spirit of prophecy in old age; but he has made this the

[1] [The reference is to a lecture on "The Chough," not hitherto published, but appended in this edition to *Love's Meinie.*]

[2] [See John xi. 44.]

[3] [The type of archaic sculpture is Plate VI. in Vol. XX. But the resemblance is not clear, and it seems that Ruskin, writing here from memory, was referring to a head which was shown at the delivery of the lectures entitled *Aratra Pentelici*, but was not given in the published volume.]

In the Woods of Ida

most interesting plate of the series in the definiteness of its connection with the work from Dante,[1] which becomes his own prophecy in old age. The fantastic yet solemn treatment of the gnarled wood occurs, as far as I know, in no other engravings but this, and the illustrations to Dante; and I am content to leave it, with little comment, for the reader's quiet study, as showing the exuberance of imagination which other men at this time in Italy allowed to waste itself in idle arabesque, restrained by Botticelli to his most earnest purposes; and giving the withered tree-trunks, hewn for the rude throne of the aged prophetess, the same harmony with her fading spirit which the rose has with youth, or the laurel with victory. Also in its weird characters, you have the best example I can show you of the orders of decorative design which are especially expressible by engraving, and which belong to a group of art instincts scarcely now to be understood, much less recovered (the influence of modern naturalistic imitation being too strong to be conquered)—the instincts, namely, for the arrangement of pure line, in labyrinthine intricacy, through which the grace of order may give continual clue. The entire body of ornamental design, connected with writing, in the Middle Ages seems as if it were a sensible symbol, to the eye and brain, of the methods of error and recovery, the minglings of crooked with straight, and perverse with progressive, which constitute the great problem of human morals and fate; and when I chose the title for the collected series of these lectures,[2] I hoped to have justified it by careful analysis of the methods of labyrinthine ornament, which, made sacred by Theseian traditions,* and beginning, in imitation of physical truth, with the spiral waves of the waters of Babylon as the Assyrian carved them, entangled in their returns the eyes of men, on Greek vase and Christian

* Callimachus, *Delos*, 304, etc.

[1] [See above, §§ 193, 194, p. 433.]
[2] [See the Introduction (above, p. xl.).]

manuscript—till they closed in the arabesques which sprang round the last luxury of Venice and Rome.

But the labyrinth of life itself, and its more and more interwoven occupation, become too manifold, and too difficult for me; and of the time wasted in the blind lanes of it, perhaps that spent in analysis or recommendation of the art to which men's present conduct makes them insensible, has been chiefly cast away. On the walls of the little room where I finally revise this lecture,* hangs an old silken sampler of great-grandame's work: representing the domestic life of Abraham: chiefly the stories of Isaac and Ishmael. Sarah at her tent-door, watching, with folded arms, the dismissal of Hagar: above, in a wilderness full of fruit trees, birds, and butterflies, little Ishmael lying at the root of a tree, and the spent bottle under another; Hagar in prayer, and the angel appearing to her out of a wreathed line of gloomily undulating clouds, which, with a dark-rayed sun in the midst, surmount the entire composition in two arches, out of which descend shafts of (I suppose) beneficent rain; leaving, however, room, in the corner opposite to Ishmael's angel, for Isaac's, who stays Abraham in the sacrifice; the ram in the thicket, the squirrel in the plum tree above him, and the grapes, pears, apples, roses, and daisies of the foreground, being all wrought with involution of such ingenious needlework as may well rank, in the patience, the natural skill, and the innocent pleasure of it, with the truest works of Florentine engraving. Nay; the actual tradition of many of the forms of ancient art is in many places evident,—as, for instance, in the spiral summits of the flames of the wood on the altar, which are like a group of first-springing fern. On the wall opposite is a smaller composition, representing Justice with her balance and sword, standing between the sun and moon, with a background of pinks, borage, and corncockle: a third is only

* In the Old King's Arms Hotel, Lancaster.[1]

[1] [Where Ruskin and his parents had stayed on northern journeys from very early days (1830).]

a cluster of tulips and iris, with two Byzantine peacocks; but the spirits of Penelope and Ariadne reign vivid in all the work—and the richness of pleasurable fancy is as great still, in these silken labours, as in the marble arches and golden roof of the cathedral of Monreale.[1]

But what is the use of explaining or analyzing it? Such work as this means the patience and simplicity of all feminine life; and can be produced, among *us* at least, no more. Gothic tracery itself, another of the instinctive labyrinthine intricacies of old, though analyzed to its last section, has become now the symbol only of a foolish ecclesiastical sect,[2] retained for their shibboleth, joyless, and powerless for all good. The very labyrinth of the grass and flowers of our fields, though dissected to its last leaf, is yet bitten bare, or trampled to slime, by the Minotaur of our lust; and for the traceried spire of the poplar by the brook, we possess but the four-square furnace tower, to mingle its smoke with heaven's thunder-clouds.*

We will look yet at one sampler more of the engraved work, done in the happy time when flowers were pure, youth simple, and imagination gay,—Botticelli's Libyan Sibyl.[3]

Glance back first to the Hellespontic,[4] noting the close fillet, and the cloth bound below the face, and then you

* A manufacturer wrote to me the other day, "We don't *want* to make smoke!" Who said they did?—a hired murderer does not want to commit murder, but does it for sufficient motive. (Even our shipowners don't want to drown their sailors; they will only do it for sufficient motive.[5]) If the dirty creatures *did* want to make smoke, there would be more excuse for them: and that they are not clever enough to consume it, is no praise to them. A man who can't help his hiccough leaves the room: why do they not leave the England they pollute?

[1] [The roof is of wood, gabled, with tie-beams resting on pendatives, all blazing with gold and colour. It was entirely reconstructed after a fire in 1811. Ruskin visited Monreale during his stay at Palermo in 1874: see the extract from his diary given in Vol. XXI. p. 112 *n.*]

[2] [See on this subject, Vol. VIII. p. xlvi.; Vol. IX. p. 437; and Vol. XVIII. p. 443.]

[3] [Plate XXXIV.; for another reference to it, see above, § 147, p. 395.]

[4] [Plate XXXIII.]

[5] [See several references at this time (1874) in *Fors Clavigera.*]

will be prepared to understand the last I shall show you, and the loveliest of the southern Pythonesses.

222. A less deep thinker than Botticelli would have made her parched with thirst, and burnt with heat. But the voice of God, through nature, to the Arab or the Moor, is not in the thirst, but in the fountain—not in the desert, but in the grass of it. And this Libyan Sibyl is the spirit of wild grass and flowers, springing in desolate places.

You see, her diadem is a wreath of them; but the blossoms of it are not fastening enough for her hair, though it is not long yet—(she is only in reality a Florentine girl of fourteen or fifteen)—so the little darling knots it under her ears, and then makes herself a necklace of it. But though flowing hair and flowers are wild and pretty, Botticelli had not, in these only, got the power of Spring marked to his mind. Any girl might wear flowers; but few, for ornament, would be likely to wear grass. So the Sibyl shall have grass in her diadem; not merely interwoven and bending, but springing and strong. You thought it ugly and grotesque at first, did not you? It was made so, because precisely what Botticelli wanted you to look at.

But that's not all. This conical cap of hers, with one bead at the top,—considering how fond the Florentines are of graceful head-dresses, this seems a strange one for a young girl. But, exactly as I know the angel of Victory to be Greek, at his Mount of Pity, so I know this head-dress to be taken from a Greek coin, and to be meant for a Greek symbol. It is the Petasus of Hermes—the mist of morning over the dew. Lastly, what will the Libyan Sibyl say to you? The letters are large on her tablet. Her message is the oracle from the temple of the Dew: "The dew of thy birth is as the womb of the morning."[1] —"Ecce venientem diem, et latentia aperientem, tenebit gremio gentium regina."

223. Why the daybreak came not then, nor yet has

[1] [Psalms cx. 3 (Prayer-book): "The dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning."]

Allen & Co. Sc.

Grass of the Desert

come, but only a deeper darkness; and why there is now neither queen nor king of nations, but every man doing that which is right in his own eyes,[1] I would fain go on, partly to tell you, and partly to meditate with you: but it is not our work for to-day. The issue of the Reformation which these great painters, the scholars of Dante, began, we may follow, farther, in the study to which I propose to lead you, of the lives of Cimabue and Giotto, and the relation of their work at Assisi to the chapel and chambers of the Vatican.[2]

224. To-day let me finish what I have to tell you of the style of southern engraving. What sudden bathos in the sentence, you think! So contemptible the question of style, then, in painting, though not in literature? You study the "style" of Homer; the style, perhaps, of Isaiah; the style of Horace, and of Massillon. Is it so vain to study the style of Botticelli?

In all cases, it is equally vain, if you think of their style first. But know their purpose, and then, their way of speaking is worth thinking of. These apparently unfinished and certainly unfilled outlines of the Florentine,—clumsy work, as Vasari thought them,—as Mr. Ottley[3] and most of our English amateurs still think them,—are these good or bad engraving?

You may ask now, comprehending their motive, with some hope of answering or being answered rightly. And the answer is, They are the finest gravers' work ever done yet by human hand. You may teach, by process of discipline and of years, any youth of good artistic capacity to engrave a plate in the modern manner; but only the noblest passion, and the tenderest patience, will ever engrave one line like these of Sandro Botticelli.

225. Passion, and patience! Nay, even these you may

[1] [Deuteronomy xii. 18.]

[2] [A reference to the course of lectures delivered in 1874 on "Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Art in Florence," in small part incorporated in *Mornings in Florence*, and now fully printed in Vol. XXIII.]

[3] [Who, however, in quoting Vasari, does not altogether endorse his verdict: see his *History of Engraving*, vol. i. p. 350.]

have to-day in England, and yet both be in vain. Only a few years ago, in one of our northern iron-foundries, a workman of intense power and natural art-faculty set himself to learn engraving;[1]—made his own tools; gave all the spare hours of his laborious life to learn their use; learnt it; and engraved a plate which, in manipulation, no professional engraver would be ashamed of. He engraved his blast-furnace, and the casting of a beam of a steam-engine. This, to him, was the power of God,—it was his life. No greater earnestness was ever given by man to promulgate a Gospel. Nevertheless, the engraving is absolutely worthless. The blast-furnace *is not* the power of God; and the life of the strong spirit was as much consumed in the flames of it, as ever driven slave's by the burden and heat of the day.

How cruel to say so, if he yet lives, you think! No, my friends; the cruelty will be in you, and the guilt, if, having been brought here to learn that God is your Light,[2] you yet leave the blast-furnace to be the only light of England.

226. It has been, as I said in the note above (§ 200), with extreme pain that I have hitherto limited my notice of our own great engraver and moralist, to the points in which the disadvantages of English art-teaching made him inferior to his trained Florentine rival. But, that these disadvantages were powerless to arrest or ignobly depress him;—that however failing in grace and scholarship, he should never fail in truth or vitality; and that the precision of his unerring hand*—his inevitable eye—and his rightly judging heart—should place him in the first rank of the great artists not of England only, but of all the world

* I know no drawing so subtle as Bewick's, since the fifteenth century, except Holbein's and Turner's. I have been greatly surprised lately by the exquisite water-colour work in some of Stothard's smaller vignettes; but he cannot set the line like Turner or Bewick.

[1] [The editors are unable to give any particulars of this plate or of its engraver; Mr. Allen remembers that the work was brought to Ruskin's notice by Mr. Le Keux.]

[2] [A reference to the motto (from Psalm xxvii. 1) on the University arms: "Dominus Illuminatio Mea."]

and of all time:—that *this* was possible to him, was simply because he lived a *country* life. Bewick himself, Botticelli himself, Apelles himself, and twenty times Apelles, condemned to slavery in the hell-fire of the iron furnace, could have done—NOTHING. Absolute paralysis of all high human faculty *must* result from labour near fire. The poor engraver of the piston-rod had faculties—not like Bewick's, for if he had had those, he never would have endured the degradation; but assuredly, (I know this by his work,) faculties high enough to have made him one of the most accomplished figure painters of his age. And they are scorched out of him, as the sap from the grass in the oven: while on his Northumberland hill-sides, Bewick grew into as stately life as their strongest pine.

227. And therefore, in words of his, telling consummate and unchanging truth concerning the life, honour, and happiness of England, and bearing directly on the points of difference between class and class which I have not dwelt on without need, I will bring these lectures to a close.[1]

"I have always, through life, been of opinion that there is no business of any kind that can be compared to that of a man who farms his own land. It appears to me that every earthly pleasure, with health, is within his reach. But numbers of these men (the old statesmen[2]) were grossly ignorant, and in exact proportion to that ignorance they were sure to be offensively proud. This led them to attempt appearing above their station, which hastened them on to their ruin; but, indeed, this disposition and this kind of conduct invariably leads to such results. There were many of these lairds on Tyneside; as well as many who held their lands on the tenure of 'suit and service,' and were nearly on the same level as the lairds. Some of the latter lost their lands (not fairly, I think) in a way they could not help; many of the former, by their misdirected

[1] [*A Memoir of Thomas Bewick, written by Himself:* Newcastle, 1862. Ruskin's quotations are from pp. 46–47 and 62–64.]

[2] [For the "statesmen," or yeomen, of the North country, see Wordsworth's letter to Charles James Fox (William Knight's *Life of Wordsworth*, vol. ii. p. 4).]

pride and folly, were driven into towns, to slide away into nothingness, and to sink into oblivion, while their 'ha' houses' (halls,) that ought to have remained in their families from generation to generation, have mouldered away. I have always felt extremely grieved to see the ancient mansions of many of the country gentlemen, from somewhat similar causes, meet with a similar fate. The gentry should, in an especial manner, prove by their conduct that they are guarded against showing any symptom of foolish pride, at the same time that they soar above every meanness, and that their conduct is guided by truth, integrity, and patriotism. If they wish the people to partake with them in these good qualities, they must set them the example, without which no real respect can ever be paid to them. Gentlemen ought never to forget the respectable station they hold in society, and that they are the natural guardians of public morals and may with propriety be considered as the head and the heart of the country, while 'a bold peasantry' are, in truth, the arms, the sinews, and the strength of the same; but when these last are degraded, they soon become dispirited and mean, and often dishonest and useless."

. . . . . .

"This singular and worthy man* was perhaps the most invaluable acquaintance and friend I ever met with. His moral lectures and advice to me formed a most important

* Gilbert Gray, bookbinder. I have to correct the inaccurate—and very harmfully inaccurate, expression which I used of Bewick, in *Love's Meinie* (§ 8), "a printer's lad at Newcastle."[1] His first master was a goldsmith and engraver, else he could never have been an artist. I am very heartily glad to make this correction, which establishes another link of relation between Bewick and Botticelli; but my error was partly caused by the impression which the above description of his "most invaluable friend" made on me, when I first read it.

Much else that I meant to correct, or promised to explain, in this lecture, must be deferred to the Appendix; the superiority of the Tuscan to the Greek Aphrodite I may perhaps, even at last, leave the reader to admit or deny as he pleases, having more important matters of debate on hand.[2]

[1] [See also above, § 101, p. 362.]
[2] [See above, § 162, p. 407.]

succedaneum to those imparted by my parents. His wise remarks, his detestation of vice, his industry, and his temperance, crowned with a most lively and cheerful disposition, altogether made him appear to me as one of the best of characters. In his workshop I often spent my winter evenings. This was also the case with a number of young men who might be considered as his pupils; many of whom, I have no doubt, he directed into the paths of truth and integrity, and who revered his memory through life. He rose early to work, lay down when he felt weary, and rose again when refreshed. His diet was of the simplest kind; and he ate when hungry, and drank when dry, without paying regard to meal-times. By steadily pursuing this mode of life he was enabled to accumulate sums of money —from ten to thirty pounds. This enabled him to get books, of an entertaining and moral tendency, printed and circulated at a cheap rate. His great object was, by every

But as I mean only to play with *Proserpina* during the spring,[1] I will here briefly anticipate a statement I mean in the Appendix to enforce, namely, of the extreme value of coloured copies by hand,[2] of paintings whose excellence greatly consists in colour, as auxiliary to engravings of them. The prices now given without hesitation for nearly worthless original drawings by fifth-rate artists, would obtain for the misguided buyers, in something like a proportion of ten to one, most precious copies of drawings which can only be represented at all in engraving by entire alteration of their treatment, and abandonment of their finest purposes. I feel this so strongly that I have given my best attention, during upwards of ten years, to train a copyist to perfect fidelity in rendering the work of Turner;[3] and having now succeeded in enabling him to produce facsimiles so close as to look like replicas, facsimiles which I must sign with my own name and his, in the very work of them, to prevent their being sold for real Turner vignettes, I can obtain no custom for him, and am obliged to leave him to make his bread by any power of captivation his original sketches may possess in the eyes of a public which maintains a nation of copyists in Rome, but is content with black and white renderings of great English art; though there is scarcely one cultivated English gentleman or lady who has not been twenty times in the Vatican, for once that they have been in the National Gallery.

[1] [After the publication in July 1875 of the part of *Ariadne* containing this lecture, and of Part II. of *Proserpina* in the following month, the conclusion of *Ariadne* was delayed until September 1876. Meanwhile two other parts of *Proserpina* were issued.]

[2] [See below, § 229, p. 463.]

[3] [For Mr. William Ward, see below, pp. 463, 473, 476.]

possible means, to promote honourable feelings in the minds of youth, and to prepare them for becoming good members of society. I have often discovered that he did not overlook ingenious mechanics, whose misfortunes—perhaps mismanagement—had led them to a lodging in Newgate. To these he directed his compassionate eye, and for the deserving (in his estimation), he paid their debt, and set them at liberty. He felt hurt at seeing the hands of an ingenious man tied up in prison, where they were of no use either to himself or to the community. This worthy man had been educated for a priest; but he would say to me, "Of a 'trouth,' Thomas, I did not like their ways." So he gave up the thoughts of being a priest, and bent his way from Aberdeen to Edinburgh, where he engaged himself to Allan Ramsay, the poet, then a bookseller at the latter place, in whose service he was both shopman and bookbinder. From Edinburgh he came to Newcastle. Gilbert had had a liberal education bestowed upon him. He had read a great deal, and had reflected upon what he had read. This, with his retentive memory, enabled him to be a pleasant and communicative companion. I lived in habits of intimacy with him to the end of his life; and, when he died, I, with others of his friends, attended his remains to the grave at the Ballast Hills."

And what graving on the sacred cliffs of Egypt ever honoured them, as that grass-dimmed furrow does the mounds of our Northern land?

# NOTES

228. I. The following letter, from one of my most faithful readers, corrects an important piece of misinterpretation in the text. The waving of the reins must be only in sign of the fluctuation of heat round the Sun's own chariot:[1]—

"Spring Field, Ambleside,
"*February* 11, 1875.

"Dear Mr. Ruskin,—Your fifth lecture on Engraving I have to hand.

"Sandro intended those wavy lines meeting under the Sun's right * hand (Plate XXIX.), primarily, no doubt, to represent the four ends of the four reins dangling from the Sun's hand. The flames and rays are seen to continue to radiate from the platform of the chariot between and beyond these ends of the reins, and over the knee. He may have wanted to acknowledge that the warmth of the earth was Apollo's, by making these ends of the reins spread out separately and wave, and thereby enclose a form like a flame. But I cannot think it.

"Believe me,
"Ever yours truly,
"Chas. Wm. Smith."

II. I meant to keep labyrinthine matters for my Appendix; but the following most useful byewords from Mr. Tyrwhitt[2] had better be read at once:—

"In the matter of Cretan Labyrinth, as connected by Virgil with the Ludus Trojæ, or equestrian game of winding and turning, continued in England from twelfth century; and having for last relic the maze † called 'Troy Town,' at Troy Farm, near Somerton, Oxfordshire, which itself resembles the circular labyrinth on a coin of Cnossus in *Fors Clavigera*. (Letter 23.)]

* "Would not the design have looked better, to us, on the plate than on the print? On the plate, the reins would be in the left hand; and the whole movement be from the left to the right? The two different forms that the radiance takes would symbolize respectively heat and light, would they not?"

† Strutt [*Sports and Pastimes of the English People*], pp. 97–98, ed. 1801.

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[1] [See above, § 160, pp. 405–406.]
[2] [For whom, see above, p. 109.]

"The connecting quotation from Virg., *Æn.*, v. 588, is as follows:—

> 'Ut quondam Creta fertur Labyrinthus in alta
> Parietibus textum cæcis iter, ancipitemque
> Mille viis habuisse dolum, qua signa sequendi
> Falleret indeprensus et inremeabilis error:
> Haud alio Teucrum nati vestigia cursu
> Impediunt, texuntque fugas et prœlia ludo,
> Delphinum similes.'"

Labyrinth of Ariadne, as cut on the Downs by shepherds from time immemorial,—

Shakespeare, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act ii. sc. 1:—

> "*Titania.* The nine-men's morris* is filled up with mud;
> And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
> For lack of tread are undistinguishable."

The following passage, *Merchant of Venice*, Act iii. sc. 2, confuses (to all appearance) the Athenian tribute to Crete, with the story of Hesione: and may point to general confusion in the Elizabethan mind about the myths:—

> "*Portia.* . . . . . with much more love
> Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
> The virgin-tribute paid by howling Troy
> To the sea monster."†

Theseus is the Attic Hercules, however; and Troy may have been a sort of house of call for mythical monsters, in the view of midland shepherds.

* Explained as "a game still played by the shepherds, cowkeepers," etc., in the midland counties.

† See *Iliad*, 20, 145.

# APPENDIX

## ARTICLE I

### NOTES ON THE PRESENT STATE OF ENGRAVING IN ENGLAND

229. I HAVE long deferred the completion of this book,[1] because I had hoped to find time to show, in some fulness, the grounds for my conviction that engraving, and the study of it, since the development of the modern finished school, have been ruinous to European knowledge of art. But I am more and more busied in what I believe to be better work,[2] and can only with extreme brevity state here the conclusions of many years' thought.

These, in several important particulars, have been curiously enforced on me by the carelessness shown by the picture dealers about the copies from Turner which it has cost Mr. Ward and me * fifteen years of study together to enable ourselves to make. "They are only copies," say they,—"nobody will look at them."

230. It never seems to occur even to the most intelligent persons that an engraving also is "only a copy," and a copy done with refusal of colour, and with disadvantage of means in rendering shade. But just because this utterly inferior copy can be reduplicated, and introduces a different

* See note to the close of this article, p. 476.

[1] [This Appendix, as already stated (p. 458 *n.*), did not appear till September 1876, though the lectures were delivered in 1872, and the first of them published in 1873.]

[2] [Partly *Fors Clavigera*, and the Guild of St. George; partly various serial publications (*Mornings in Florence*, *Deucalion*, *Bibliotheca Pastorum*).]

kind of skill, in another material, people are content to lose all the composition, and all the charm, of the original, —so far as these depend on the chief gift of a *painter*,— colour;[1] while they are gradually misled into attributing to the painter himself qualities impertinently added by the engraver to make his plate popular: and, which is far worse, they are as gradually and subtly prevented from looking, in the original, for the qualities which engraving could never render. Further, it continually happens that the very best colour-compositions engrave worst; for they often extend colours over great spaces at equal pitch, and the green is as dark as the red, and the blue as the brown; so that the engraver can only distinguish them by lines in different directions, and his plate becomes a vague and dead mass of neutral tint; but a bad and forced piece of colour, or a piece of work of the Bolognese school, which is everywhere black in the shadows, and colourless in the lights, will engrave with great ease, and appear spirited and forcible. Hence engravers, as a rule, are interested in reproducing the work of the worst schools of painting.

Also, the idea that the merit of an engraving consisted in light and shade, has prevented the modern masters from even attempting to render works dependent mainly on outline and expression; like the early frescoes, which should indeed have been the objects of their most attentive and continual skill: for outline and expression are entirely within the scope of engraving; and the scripture histories of an aisle of a cloister might have been engraved, to perfection, with little more pains than are given by ordinary workmen to round a limb by Correggio, or imitate the texture of a dress by Sir Joshua,—and both, at last, inadequately.

231.[2] I will not lose more time in asserting or lamenting the mischief arising out of the existing system: but will rapidly state what the public should now ask for.

[1] [See Vol. VII. p. 415 *n.*; and above, § 21, p. 311.]

[2] [§ 231 was reprinted by Ruskin in an appendix to his *Notes on his Drawings by Turner* (1878): see Vol. XIII. p. 529.]

(1.) Exquisitely careful engraved outlines of all remaining frescoes of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries in Italy, with so much pale tinting as may be explanatory of their main masses; and with the local darks and local lights brilliantly relieved. The Arundel Society have published some meritorious plates of this kind from Angelico, —not, however, paying respect enough to the local colours, but conventionalizing the whole too much into outline.[1]

(2.) Finished small plates for book illustration. The cheap woodcutting and etching of popular illustrated books have been endlessly mischievous to public taste: they first obtained their power in a general reaction of the public mind from the insipidity of the lower school of line engraving, brought on it by servile persistence in hack work for ignorant publishers. The last dregs of it may still be seen in the sentimental landscapes engraved for cheap ladies' pocket-books. But the woodcut can never, educationally, take the place of serene and accomplished line engraving; and the training of young artists in whom the gift of delineation prevails over their sense of colour, to the production of scholarly, but small plates, with their utmost honour of skill, would give a hitherto unconceived dignity to the character and range of our popular literature.

(3.) Vigorous mezzotints from pictures of the great masters, which originally present noble contrasts of light and shade. Many Venetian works are magnificent in this character.

(4.) Original design by painters themselves, decisively engraved in few lines—(*not* etched); and with such insistence by dotted work on the main contours as we have seen in the examples given from Italian engraving.

(5.) On the other hand, the men whose quiet patience and exquisite manual dexterity are at present employed in producing large and costly plates, such as that of the Belle Jardinière de Florence, by M. Boucher Desnoyers,[2] should

[1] [The drawings from which the chromo-lithographs were made may now be seen in the National Gallery.]

[2] [See *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 103 (Vol. XXI. p. 36). Compare § 117 above, p. 372.]

be entirely released from their servile toil, and employed exclusively in producing coloured copies, or light drawings, from the original work. The same number of hours of labour, applied with the like conscientious skill, would multiply precious likenesses of the real picture, full of subtle veracities which no steel line could approach, and conveying, to thousands, true knowledge and unaffected enjoyment of painting; while the finished plate lies uncared for in the portfolio of the virtuoso, serving only, so far as it is seen in the printseller's window by the people, to make them think that sacred painting must always be dull, and unnatural.

232. I have named the above engraving, because, for persons wishing to study the present qualities and methods of line-work, it is a pleasant and sufficient possession, uniting every variety of texture with great serenity of unforced effect, and exhibiting every possible artifice and achievement in the distribution of even and rugged, or of close and open line; artifices for which,—while I must yet once more and emphatically repeat that they are illegitimate, and could not be practised in a revived school of classic art,—I would fain secure the reader's reverent admiration, under the conditions exacted by the school to which they belong. Let him endeavour, with the finest point of pen or pencil he can obtain, to imitate the profile of this Madonna in its relief against the grey background of the water surface; let him examine, through a good lens, the way in which the lines of the background are ended in a lance-point as they approach it; the exact equality of depth of shade being restored by inserted dots, which prepare for the transition to the manner of shade adopted in the flesh: then let him endeavour to trace with his own hand some of the curved lines at the edge of the eyelid, or in the rounding of the lip; or if these be too impossible, even a few of the quiet undulations which gradate the folds of the hood behind the hair; and he will, I trust, begin to comprehend the range of delightful work which would be

within the reach of such an artist, employed with more tractable material on more extended subject.

233. If, indeed, the present system were capable of influencing the mass of the people, and enforcing among them the subtle attention necessary to appreciate it, something might be pleaded in defence of its severity. But all these plates are entirely above the means of the lower middle classes, and perhaps not one reader in a hundred can possess himself, for the study I ask of him, even of the plate to which I have just referred. What, in the stead of such, he can and does possess, let him consider,—and, if possible, just after examining the noble qualities of this conscientious engraving.

234. Take up, for an average specimen of modern illustrated works, the volume of Dickens's *Master Humphrey's Clock*, containing *Barnaby Rudge*.[1]

You have in that book an entirely profitless and monstrous story, in which the principal characters are a coxcomb, an idiot, a madman, a savage blackguard, a foolish tavern-keeper, a mean old maid, and a conceited apprentice, —mixed up with a certain quantity of ordinary operatic pastoral stuff, about a pretty Dolly in ribands, a lover with a wooden leg, and an heroic locksmith. For these latter, the only elements of good, or life, in the filthy mass of the story,* observe that the author must filch the wreck of those old times of which we fiercely and frantically destroy every living vestige, whenever it is possible. You cannot have your Dolly Varden brought up behind the counter of a railway station; nor your jolly locksmith trained at a Birmingham brass-foundry. And of these materials, observe

* The raven, however, like all Dickens's animals, is perfect: and I am the more angry with the rest because I have every now and then to open the book to look for him.

[1] [*Barnaby Rudge* was first issued in vols. ii. and iii. of *Master Humphrey's Clock*, 1840–1841, with illustrations by George Cattermole and H. K. Browne (mainly by the latter). For another similar criticism of *Barnaby Rudge*, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 14 *n.*]

that you can only have the ugly ones illustrated. The cheap popular art cannot draw for you beauty, sense, or honesty; and for Dolly Varden, or the locksmith, you will look through the vignettes in vain. But every species of distorted folly and vice,—the idiot, the blackguard, the coxcomb, the paltry fool, the degraded woman,—are pictured for your honourable pleasure in every page, with clumsy caricature, struggling to render its dulness tolerable by insisting on defect,—if perchance a penny or two more may be coined out of the Cockney reader's itch for loathsomeness.

235. Or take up, for instance of higher effort, the *Cornhill Magazine* for this month, July, 1876. It has a vignette of Venice for an illuminated letter.[1] That is what your decorative art has become, by help of Kensington! The letter to be produced is a T. There is a gondola in the front of the design, with the canopy slipped back to the stern like a saddle over a horse's tail. There is another in the middle distance, all gone to seed at the prow, with its gondolier emaciated into an oar, at the stern; then there is a Church of the Salute, and a Ducal Palace,—in which I beg you to observe all the felicity and dexterity of modern cheap engraving; finally, over the Ducal Palace there is something, I know not in the least what meant for, like an umbrella dropping out of a balloon, which is the ornamental letter T. Opposite this ornamental design, there is an engraving of two young ladies and a parasol, between two trunks of trees. The white face and black feet of the principal young lady, being the points of the design, are done with as much care,—not with as much dexterity,—as an ordinary sketch of Du Maurier's in *Punch*. The young lady's dress, the next attraction, is done in cheap white and black cutting, with considerably less skill than that of any ordinary tailor's or milliner's shop-book pattern drawing.

[1] [The initial letter (unsigned) is at the beginning of chapter iv. of a story called "Carità." The wood-engraving opposite is from a sketch by Du Maurier, entitled "Carry in her white frock, erect as a little pillar."]

For the other young lady, and the landscape, take your magnifying glass, and look at the hacked wood that forms the entire shaded surface—one mass of idiotic scrabble, without the remotest attempt to express a single leaf, flower, or clod of earth. It is such landscape as the public sees out of its railroad window at sixty miles of it in the hour —and good enough for such a public.

236. Then turn to the last—the poetical plate, p. 122: "Lifts her—lays her down with care."[1] Look at the gentleman with a spade, promoting the advance, over a hillock of hay, of the reposing figure in the black-sided tub. Take your magnifying glass to *that*, and look what a dainty female arm and hand your modern scientific and anatomical schools of art have provided you with! Look at the tender horizontal flux of the sea round the promontory point above. Look at the tender engraving of the linear light on the divine horizon, above the ravenous sea-gull. Here is Development and Progress for you, from the days of Perugino's horizon, and Dante's daybreaks! Truly, here it seems

> "Si che le bianche e le vermiglie guance
> Per troppa etate divenivan rance."[2]

237. I have chosen no gross or mean instances of modern work. It is one of the saddest points connected with the matter that the designer of this last plate is a person of consummate art faculty, but bound to the wheel of the modern Juggernaut, and broken on it. These woodcuts, for *Barnaby Rudge* and the *Cornhill Magazine*, are favourably representative of the entire illustrative art industry of the modern press,—industry enslaved to the ghastly service of catching the last gleams in the glued eyes of the daily more bestial English mob,—railroad born and bred, which drags itself about the black world it has withered under its breath, in one eternal grind and shriek,—gobbling,—staring,—chattering,—giggling,—trampling out every

[1] [This is an illustration by H. Allingham of William Allingham's "Mervaunee."]
[2] [*Purgatorio*, ii. 7, 9.]

vestige of national honour and domestic peace, wherever it sets the staggering hoof of it; incapable of reading, of hearing, of thinking, of looking,—capable only of greed for money, lust for food, pride of dress, and the prurient itch of momentary curiosity for the politics last announced by the newsmonger, and the religion last rolled by the chemist into electuary for the dead.

238. In the miserably competitive labour of finding new stimulus for the appetite—daily more gross—of this tyrannous mob, we may count as lost, beyond any hope, the artists who are dull, docile, or distressed enough to submit to its demands; and we may count the dull and the distressed by myriads;—and among the docile, many of the best intellects we possess. The few who have sense and strength to assert their own place and supremacy, are driven into discouraged disease by their isolation, like Turner and Blake; the one abandoning the design of his *Liber Studiorum* after imperfectly and sadly, against total public neglect, carrying it forward to what it is,—monumental, nevertheless, in landscape engraving; the other producing, with one only majestic series of designs from the book of Job, nothing for his life's work but coarsely iridescent sketches of enigmatic dream.[1]

239. And, for total result of our English engraving industry during the last hundred and fifty years, I find that practically at this moment I cannot get a *single* piece of true, sweet, and comprehensible art, to place for instruction in any children's school! I can get, for ten pounds apiece, well-engraved portraits of Sir Joshua's beauties showing graceful limbs through flowery draperies; I can get—dirt-cheap—any quantity of Dutch flats, ditches, and hedges, enlivened by cows chewing the cud, and dogs behaving indecently; I can get heaps upon heaps of temples, and forums, and altars, arranged as for academical competition,

[1] [With this reference to Blake, compare *Eagle's Nest*, § 21 (above, p. 138), and the passages there cited in the note; for his Job, see Vol. V. pp. 137–138, and *Art of England*, § 101.]

round seaports, with curled-up ships that only touch the water with the middle of their bottoms. I can get, at the price of lumber, any quantity of British squires flourishing whips and falling over hurdles; and, in suburban shops, a dolorous variety of widowed mothers nursing babies in a high light with the Bible on a table, and baby's shoes on a chair. Also, of cheap prints, painted red and blue, of Christ blessing little children, of Joseph and his brethren, the infant Samuel, or Daniel in the lions' den, the supply is ample enough to make every child in these islands think of the Bible as a somewhat dull story-book, allowed on Sunday;—but of trained, wise, and worthy art, applied to gentle purposes of instruction, no single example can be found in the shops of the British printseller or bookseller. And after every dilettante tongue in European society has filled drawing-room and academy alike with idle clatter concerning the divinity of Raphael and Michael Angelo, for these last hundred years, I cannot at this instant, for the first school which I have some power of organizing under St. George's laws, get a good print of Raphael's Madonna of the Tribune,[1] or an ordinarily intelligible view of the side and dome of St. Peter's!

240. And there are simply no words for the mixed absurdity and wickedness of the present popular demand for art, as shown by its supply in our thoroughfares. Abroad, in the shops of the Rue de Rivoli, brightest and most central of Parisian streets, the putrescent remnant of what was once Catholicism promotes its poor gilded pedlars' ware of nativity and crucifixion into such honourable corners as it can find among the more costly and studious illuminations of the brothel: and although, in Pall Mall, and the Strand, the large-margined Landseer,—Stanfield,—or Turner-proofs, in a few stately windows, still represent, uncared-for by the people, or inaccessible to them, the power of an English school now wholly perished,—these are too surely

[1] [Compare Vol. XXI. p. 144. And, with regard to the lack of engravings, compare above, p. 389.]

superseded, in the windows that stop the crowd, by the thrilling attraction with which Doré, Gérome, and Tadema have invested the gambling table, the duelling ground, and the arena;[1] or by the more material and almost tangible truth with which the apothecary-artist stereographs the stripped actress, and the railway mound.

241. Under these conditions, as I have now repeatedly asserted, no professorship, nor school, of art can be of the least use to the general public. No race can understand a visionary landscape, which blasts its real mountains into ruin, and blackens its river-beds with foam of poison. Nor is it of the least use to exhibit ideal Diana at Kensington,[2] while substantial Phryne may be worshipped in the Strand. The only recovery of our art-power possible,—nay, when once we know the full meaning of it, the only one desirable,—must result from the purification of the nation's heart, and chastisement of its life:[3] utterly hopeless now, for our adult population, or in our large cities, and their neighbourhood. But, so far as any of the sacred influence of former design can be brought to bear on the minds of the young, and so far as, in rural districts, the first elements of scholarly education can be made pure, the foundation of a new dynasty of thought may be slowly laid. I was strangely impressed by the effect produced in a provincial seaport school for children, chiefly of fishermen's families, by the gift of a little coloured drawing of a single figure from the Paradise of Angelico in the Accademia of Florence.[4] The drawing was wretched enough, seen beside the original; I had only bought it from the poor Italian copyist for charity: but, to the children, it was like an actual glimpse of heaven; they rejoiced in it with pure joy, and their

[1] [For another reference in this sense to the works of Doré and Gérome, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 35, § 11; and for the "Pyrrhic Dance" of Alma Tadema (Academy, 1869), see *Art of England*, § 79.]

[2] [In the Sculpture Gallery of Casts from the Antique at the Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum.]

[3] [See *Lectures on Art*, § 29 (Vol. XX. p. 42).]

[4] [For other references to this picture, see *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence*, § 102 (Vol. XXIII. p. 259).]

mistress thanked me for it more than if I had sent her a whole library of good books. Of such copies, the grace-giving industry of young girls, now worse than lost in the spurious charities of the bazaar, or selfish ornamentations of the drawing-room, might, in a year's time, provide enough for every dame-school in England; and a year's honest work of the engravers employed on our base novels, might represent to our advanced students every frescoed legend of philosophy and morality extant in Christendom.

242. For my own part, I have no purpose, in what remains to me of opportunity, either at Oxford or elsewhere, to address any farther course of instruction towards the development of existing schools. After seeing the stream of the Teviot as black as ink,[1] and a putrid carcase of a sheep lying in the dry channel of the Jed, under Jedburgh Abbey (the entire strength of the summer stream being taken away to supply a single mill), I know, finally, what value the British mind sets on the "beauties of nature," and shall attempt no farther the excitement of its enthusiasm in that direction. I shall indeed endeavour to carry out, with Mr. Ward's help, my twenty years' held purpose of making the real character of Turner's work known,[2] to the persons who, formerly interested by the engravings from him, imagined half the merit was of the engraver's giving.[3] But I know perfectly that to the general people, trained in the midst of the ugliest objects that vice can design, in houses, mills, and machinery, *all* beautiful form and colour is as invisible as the seventh heaven. It is not a question of appreciation at all; the thing is physically invisible to them, as human speech is inaudible during a steam whistle.

243. And I shall also use all the strength I have to convince those, among our artists of the second order, who are wise and modest enough not to think themselves the matches of Turner or Michael Angelo, that in the present

[1] [Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 72.]
[2] [For Ruskin's schemes in this direction, dating back to 1856, see Vol. V. p. 9; Vol. XIII. p. lix.; and Vol. XVII. p. lxii.]
[3] [Compare § 5 (above, p. 308).]

state of art they only waste their powers in endeavouring to produce original pictures of human form or passion. Modern aristocratic life is too vulgar, and modern peasant life too unhappy, to furnish subjects of noble study; while, even were it otherwise, the multiplication of designs by painters of second-rate power is no more desirable than the writing of music by inferior composers. They may, with far greater personal happiness, and incalculably greater advantage to others, devote themselves to the affectionate and sensitive copying of the works of men of just renown.[1] The dignity of this self-sacrifice would soon be acknowledged with sincere respect; for copies produced by men working with such motive would differ no less from the common trade-article of the galleries than the rendering of music by an enthusiastic and highly trained executant differs from the grinding of a street organ. And the change in the tone of public feeling, produced by familiarity with such work, would soon be no less great than in their musical enjoyment, if, having been accustomed only to hear black Christys, blind fiddlers, and hoarse beggars scrape or howl about their streets, they were permitted daily audience of faithful and gentle orchestral rendering of the work of the highest classical masters.

244. I have not, until very lately, rightly appreciated the results of the labour of the Arundel Society in this direction.[2] Although, from the beginning, I have been honoured in being a member of its council, my action has been hitherto rather of check than help, because I thought more of the differences between our copies and the great originals, than of their unquestionable superiority to anything the public could otherwise obtain.

I was practically convinced of their extreme value only

[1] [Some such copies, commissioned by Ruskin, are in his Art Collection at Oxford (see Vol. XXI. pp. 299, 300), and many more in the St. George's Museum at Sheffield (see a later volume). On the subject of copies generally, see Vol. XVI. p. 78 *n.*]

[2] [For Ruskin's connexion with the Arundel Society (founded in 1849), see Vol. IV. pp. xliv.–xlv. Two monographs which he wrote for it are printed in Vol. XXIV.; and an address (hitherto unpublished) is included in a later volume of this edition.]

this last winter, by staying at the house of a friend in which the Arundel engravings were the principal decoration; and where I learned more of Masaccio from the Arundel copy of the contest with Simon Magus,[1] than in the Brancacci chapel itself; for the daily companionship with the engraving taught me subtleties in its composition which had escaped me in the multitudinous interest of visits to the actual fresco.

But the work of the Society has been sorely hindered hitherto, because it has had at command only the skill of copyists trained in foreign schools of colour, and accustomed to meet no more accurate requisitions than those of the fashionable traveller. I have always hoped for, and trust at last to obtain, co-operation with our too mildly laborious copyists, of English artists possessing more brilliant colour faculty; and the permission of our subscribers to secure for them the great ruins of the noble past, undesecrated by the trim, but treacherous, plastering of modern emendation.

245. Finally, I hope to direct some of the antiquarian energy often to be found remaining, even when love of the picturesque has passed away, to encourage the accurate delineation and engraving of historical monuments, as a direct function of our schools of art. All that I have generally to suggest on this matter has been already stated with sufficient clearness in the fourth of my inaugural lectures at Oxford:[2] and my forthcoming *Elements of Drawing*[3] will contain all the directions I can give in writing as to methods of work for such purpose. The publication of these has been hindered, for at least a year, by the abuses introduced by the modern cheap modes of printing engravings. I find the men won't use any ink but what pleases

[1] [For other references to Masaccio and his work in the Brancacci Chapel, in S. Maria del Carmine at Florence, see *Modern Painters*, vols. ii. and iii. (Vol. IV. pp. xxxv., 323, 328; Vol. V. pp. 362, 396), and *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (Vol. XII. pp. 113, 296).]

[2] [See *Lectures on Art*, §§ 114, 115 (Vol. XX. pp. 105, 106).]

[3] [The "forthcoming *Elements of Drawing*" was *The Laws of Fésole* (as noted in the small edition of *Ariadne*); but this work (see Vol. XV.), never completed, does not contain the proposed directions; though ch. viii. bears upon the matter (Vol. XV. pp. 436–438).]

them; nor print but with what pressure pleases them; and if I can get the foreman to attend to the business, and choose the ink right, the men change it the moment he leaves the room, and threaten to throw up the job when they are detected. All this, I have long known well, is a matter of course, in the outcome of modern principles of trade; but it has rendered it hitherto impossible for me to produce illustrations, which have been ready, as far as my work or that of my own assistants is concerned, for a year and a half. Any one interested in hearing of our progress —or arrest, may write to my Turner copyist, Mr. Ward:* and, in the meantime, they can help my designs for art education best by making these Turner copies more generally known; and by determining, when they travel, to spend what sums they have at their disposal, not in fady photography, but in the encouragement of any good *water-colour* and *pencil* draughtsmen whom they find employed in the *galleries* of Europe.

* 2, Church Terrace, Richmond, Surrey.[1] NOTE.—I have hitherto permitted Mr. Ward to copy any Turner drawing he was asked to do; but, finding there is a run upon the vignettes of Loch Lomond and Derwent, I have forbidden him to do more of them for the present, lest his work should get the least mechanical. The admirable drawings of Venice, by my good assistant, Mr. Bunney,[2] resident there, will become of more value to their purchasers every year, as the buildings from which they are made are destroyed. I was but just in time, working with him at Verona, to catch record of Fra Giocondo's work in the smaller square;[3] the most beautiful Renaissance design in North Italy.

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[1] [For further particulars about Mr. Ward's copies, see Vol. XIII. pp. 575–578. Although, as above stated (§ 229), the dealers were careless of the work, there was no lack of private custom.]

[2] [See Vol. XXI. p. 33 *n.*]

[3] [The drawing is now at Sheffield; for the "restoration" of the building, see Vol. XI. p. 20 *n.*]

# ARTICLE II

## DETACHED NOTES

### I

*On the series of Sibyl engravings attributed to Botticelli*

246. SINCE I wrote the earlier lectures in this volume, I have been made more doubtful on several points which were embarrassing enough before, by seeing some better (so-called) impressions of my favourite plates containing light and shade which did not improve them.[1]

I do not choose to waste time or space in discussion, till I know more of the matter; and that more I must leave to my good friend Mr. Reid of the British Museum to find out for me;[2] for I have no time to take up the subject myself, but I give, for frontispiece to this Appendix, the engraving of Joshua referred to in the text,[3] which, however beautiful in thought, is an example of the inferior execution and more elaborate shade which puzzle me. But whatever is said in the previous pages of the plates chosen for example, by whomsoever done,[4] is absolutely trustworthy. Thoroughly fine they are, in their existing state, and exemplary to all persons and times. And of the rest, in fitting place I hope to give complete—or at least satisfactory account.[5]

[1] [See, on this subject, §§ 81, 136 (above, pp. 351–352, 385).]
[2] [George William Reid (1819–1887), keeper of the department of prints and drawings (1866–1883).]
[3] [Plate XXX.; now given opposite the text, § 202, p. 438.]
[4] [See the Introduction (above, p. xxxix.).]
[5] [This, however, was not done.]

## II

*On the three excellent engravers representative of the first, middle, and late schools*

247. I have given opposite a photograph, slightly reduced from the Dürer Madonna,[1] alluded to often in the text, as an example of his best conception of womanhood. It is very curious that Dürer, the least able of all great artists to represent womanhood, should of late have been a very principal object of feminine admiration.[2] The last thing a woman should do is to write about art. They never see anything in pictures but what they are told (or resolve to see out of contradiction)—or the particular things that fall in with their own feelings. I saw a curious piece of enthusiastic writing by an Edinburgh lady, the other day, on the photographs I had taken from the tower of Giotto.[3] She did not care a straw what Giotto had meant by them, declared she felt it her duty only to announce what they were to *her;* and wrote two pages on the bas-relief of Heracles and Antæus—assuming it to be the death of Abel.

248. It is not, however, by women only that Dürer has been over-praised. He stands so alone in his own field, that the people who care much for him generally lose the power of enjoying anything else rightly; and are continually attributing to the force of his imagination quaintnesses which are merely part of the general mannerism of his day.

The following notes upon him, in relation to two other excellent engravers, were written shortly for extempore expansion in lecturing. I give them, with the others in this

[1] [The present photogravure gives the full size of the original. There is in *Ariadne* only one allusion to it (§ 125, p. 378); but see also No. 21 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue (Vol. XIX. p. 272), and No. 66 in the Rudimentary Series (Vol. XXI. p. 186).]

[2] [The reference is perhaps to Mrs. Heaton's *History of the Life of Albrecht Dürer*, published in 1870; cited in Vol. XXI. p. 24.]

[3] [This portion of *Ariadne* was written in 1876, and Ruskin refers to some notice of photographs which he had taken in 1874 (see Preface to *The Shepherd's Tower*, in Vol. XXIII.). The bas-relief of Hercules and Antæus is described in *Mornings in Florence*, § 136.]

The Coronation in the Garden

terminal article, mainly for use to myself in future reference; but also as more or less suggestive to the reader, if he has taken up the subject seriously, and worth, therefore, a few pages of this closing sheet.

249. The men I have named as representative of all the good ones composing their school, are alike resolved their engraving shall be lovely.

But Botticelli, the ancient, wants, with as little engraving, as much Sibyl as possible.

Dürer, the central, wants, with as much engraving as possible, anything of Sibyl that may chance to be picked up with it.

Beaugrand, the modern, wants, as much Sibyl as possible, and as much engraving too.

250. I repeat—for I want to get this clear to you—Botticelli wants, with as little engraving, as much Sibyl as possible. For his head is full of Sibyls, and his heart. He can't draw them fast enough: one comes, and another and another; and all, gracious and wonderful and good, to be engraved for ever, if only he had a thousand hands and lives. He scratches down one, with no haste, with no fault, divinely careful, scrupulous, patient, but with as few lines as possible. "Another Sibyl—let me draw another, for heaven's sake, before she has burnt all her books, and vanished."

Dürer is exactly Botticelli's opposite. He is a workman, to the heart, and will do his work magnificently. "No matter what I do it on, so that my craft be honourably shown. Anything will do; a Sibyl, a skull, a Madonna and Christ, a hat and feather, an Adam, an Eve, a cock, a sparrow, a lion with two tails, a pig with five legs,—anything will do for me.[1] But see if I don't show you what engraving is, be my subject what it may!"

[1] [The references here are to the coat of arms with a skull (see Rudimentary Series, No. 65, Vol. XXI. p. 186); to the coat of arms with a cock, showing also the lion (see Vol. XV. p. 79); to the "Madonna with the monkey" (showing also a sparrow); to the "Monstrous Hog" (with *eight* legs); and to "The Lord and the Lady" (hat and feathers). For a feather by Dürer, see Plate I. in *Laws of Fésole* (Vol. XV.), and compare in that volume, p. 412; for "Adam and Eve," see above, §§ 128, 129, 169.]

**251. Thirdly: Beaugrand,[1] I said, wants as much Sibyl as possible, and as much engraving. He is essentially a copyist, and has no ideas of his own, but deep reverence and love for the work of others. He will give his life to represent another man's thought. He will do his best with every spot and line,—exhibit to you, if you will only look, the most exquisite completion of obedient skill; but will be content, if you will not look, to pass his neglected years in fruitful peace, and count every day well spent that has given softness to a shadow, or light to a smile.**

### III

*On Dürer's landscape, with reference to the sentence on p. 413:*
**"I hope you are pleased"**

252. I spoke just now only of the ill-shaped body of this figure of Fortune, or Pleasure. Beneath her feet is an elaborate landscape. It is all drawn out of Dürer's head;—he would look at bones or tendons carefully, or at the leaf details of foreground;—but at the breadth and loveliness of real landscape, never.

He has tried to give you a bird's-eye view of Germany; rocks, and woods, and clouds, and brooks, and the pebbles in their beds, and mills, and cottages, and fences, and what not; but it is all a feverish dream, ghastly and strange, a monotone of diseased imagination.

And here is a little bit of the world he would not look at—of the great river of his land, with a single cluster of its reeds, and two boats, and an island with a village, and the way for the eternal waters opened between the rounded hills.*

* The engraving of Turner's "Scene on the Rhine" (near Bingen?) with boats on the right, and reedy foreground on left; the opening between its mountain banks in central distance. It is exquisitely engraved, the plate being of the size of the drawing, about ten inches by six, and finished with extreme care and feeling.

[1] [See above, §§ 128–129, p. 381.]

It is just what you may see any day, anywhere,—innocent, seemingly artless; but the artlessness of Turner is like the face of Gainsborough's village girl,[1] and a joy for ever.

## IV

### *On the study of anatomy*[2]

258. The virtual beginner of artistic anatomy in Italy was a man called "The Poulterer"—from his grandfather's trade;[3] "Pollajuolo," a man of immense power, but on whom the curse of the Italian mind in this age* was set at its deepest.

Any form of passionate excess has terrific effects on body and soul, in nations as in men; and when this excess is in rage, and rage against your brother, and rage accomplished in habitual deeds of blood,—do you think Nature will forget to set the seal of her indignation upon the forehead? I told you that the great division of spirit between the northern and southern races had been reconciled in the Val d'Arno.[4] The Font of Florence, and the Font of Pisa, were as the very springs of the life of the Christianity which had gone forth to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Prince of Peace.[5] Yet these two brother cities were to each other—I do not say as Abel and Cain, but as Eteocles and Polynices, and the words of Æschylus are now fulfilled in them to the uttermost. The Arno baptizes their dead bodies:—their native valley between its mountains is to them as the furrow of a grave;—"and so much of their land they have, as is sepulchre."[6]

* See the horrible picture of St. Sebastian by him in our own National Gallery. [No. 292.]

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[1] [See the frontispiece; and compare, above, pp. 393, 396.]
[2] [For references to the subject, see above, §§ 111, 163, 168 (pp. 366, 407, 412).]
[3] [For another reference to Pollajuolo in this sense, see *Love's Meinie*, § 13.]
[4] [See above, § 67, p. 343.]
[5] [Matthew xxviii. 19; Isaiah ix. 6.]
[6] [Æschylus, *Seven against Thebes*, 816: ἔχουσι δ' ἦν λάβωσιν ἐν ταφῇ χθονὸς.]

Nay, not of Florence and Pisa only was this true: Venice and Genoa died in death-grapple; and eight cities of Lombardy divided between them the joy of levelling Milan to her lowest stone. Nay, not merely in city against city, but in street against street, and house against house, the fury of the Theban dragon flamed ceaselessly, and with the same excuse upon men's lips. The sign of the shield of Polynices, Justice bringing back the exile, was to them all, in turn, the portent of death: and their history, in the sum of it and substance, is as of the servants of Joab and Abner by the pool of Gibeon. "They caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called 'the field of the strong men.'"[1]

254. Now it is not possible for Christian men to live thus, except under a fever of insanity. I have before, in my lectures on Prudence and Insolence in art, deliberately asserted to you the logical accuracy of the term "demoniacal possession"*—the being in the power or possession of a betraying spirit; and the definite sign of such insanity is delight in witnessing pain, usually accompanied by an instinct that gloats over or plays with physical uncleanness or disease, and always by a morbid egotism. It is not to be recognized for demoniacal power so much by its *viciousness*, as its *paltriness*,—the taking pleasure in minute, contemptible, and loathsome things.† Now, in the middle of the gallery of the Brera at Milan, there is an elaborate study of a dead Christ, entirely characteristic of early fifteenth-century Italian madman's work. It is called—and was presented to the people as—a Christ; but it *is* only an anatomical study of a vulgar and ghastly dead body, with the soles of the feet set straight at the spectator, and the rest foreshortened. It is either Castagno's or

* See *The Eagle's Nest*, § 69 [above, p. 171].

† As in the muscles of the legs and effort in stretching bows, of the executioners, in the picture just referred to.

[1] [2 Samuel ii. 16. Ruskin translates "Helkathhazzurim."]

Mantegna's,—in my mind, set down to Castagno;[1] but I have not looked at the picture for years, and am not sure at this moment. It does not matter a straw which: it is exactly characteristic of the madness in which all of them —Pollajuolo, Castagno, Mantegna, Leonardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo, polluted their work with the science of the sepulchre,* and degraded it with presumptuous and paltry

* Observe, I entirely distinguish the study of *anatomy—i.e.*, of intense bone and muscle—from study of the nude, as the Greeks practised it. This for an entirely great painter is absolutely necessary; but yet I believe, in the case of Botticelli, it was nobly restricted. The following note by Mr. Tyrwhitt contains, I think, the probable truth:—

"The facts relating to Sandro Botticelli's models, or rather to his favourite model (as it appears to me), are but few; and it is greatly to be regretted that his pictures are seldom dated;—if it were certain in what order they appeared, what follows here might approach moral certainty.

"There is no doubt that he had great personal regard for Fra Filippo, up to that painter's death in 1469, Sandro being then twenty-two years old. He may probably have got only good from him; anyhow he would get a strong turn for Realism,—*i.e.*, the treatment of sacred and all other subjects in a realistic manner. He is described in Crowe and Cavalcaselle[2] from Filippino Lippi's Martyrdom of St. Peter, as a sullen and sensual man, with beetle brows, large fleshy mouth, etc., etc. Probably he was a strong man, and intense in physical and intellectual habit.

"This man, then, begins to paint in his strength, with conviction—rather happy and innocent than not—that it is right to paint any beautiful thing, and best to paint the most beautiful,—say in 1470, at twenty-three years of age. The allegorical Spring and the Graces, and the Aphrodite now in the Uffizi, were painted for Cosmo, and seem to be taken by Vasari and others as early, or early-central, works in his life: also the portrait of Simonetta Vespucci.** He is known to have painted much in early life for the Vespucci and the Medici;—and this daughter of the former house seems to have been inamorata or mistress of Giuliano de' Medici, murdered by the Pazzi in 1478. Now it seems agreed by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, Pater,[3] etc. (and I am quite sure of it myself as to the pictures mentioned)—first, that the same slender and long-throated model appears in Spring, the Aphrodite, Calumny, and other works.†† Secondly, that she was Simonetta, the original of the Pitti portrait.

"Now I think she must have been induced to let Sandro draw from her

** Pitti, Stanza di Prometeo, 348.

†† I think Zipporah may be a remembrance of her.

[1] [In the gallery, assigned to Mantegna. For references to Andrea del Castagno (1390–1457), see Vol. V. p. 306, and Vol. XII. p. 278.]

[2] [*A New History of Painting in Italy*, 1864, vol. ii. p. 414. Filippino's painting is in the Brancacci Chapel.]

[3] [*Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, 1873, p. 50.]

technical skill. Foreshorten your Christ, and paint Him, if you can, half putrified,—that is the scientific art of the Renaissance.

255. It is impossible, however, in so vast a subject to distinguish always the beginner of things from the establisher. To the poulterer's son, Pollajuolo, remains the eternal shame of first making insane contest the only subject of art; but the two *establishers* of anatomy were Leonardo and Michael Angelo. You hear of Leonardo chiefly because of his Last Supper, but Italy did not hear of him for that. This was not what brought *her* to worship Leonardo—but the Battle of the Standard.[1]

whole person undraped, more or less; and that he must have done so as such a man probably would, in strict honour as to deed, word, and *definite* thought, but under occasional accesses of passion of which he said nothing, and which in all probability and by grace of God refined down to nil, or nearly so, as he got accustomed to look in honour at so beautiful a thing. (He may have left off the undraped after her death.) First, her figure is absolutely fine Gothic; I don't think any antique is so slender. Secondly, she has the sad, passionate, and exquisite Lombard mouth. Thirdly, her limbs shrink together, and she seems not quite to have 'liked it,' or been an accustomed model. Fourthly, there is tradition, giving her name to all those forms.

"Her lover Giuliano was murdered in 1478, and Savonarola hanged and burnt in 1498. Now, can her distress, and Savonarola's preaching, between them, have taken, in few years, all the carnality out of Sandro, supposing him to have come already, by seventy-eight, to that state in which the sight of her delighted him, without provoking ulterior feelings? All decent men accustomed to draw from the nude tell us they get to that.

"Sandro's Dante is dated as published in 1482. He may have been saddening by that time, and weary of beauty, pure or mixed;—though he went on painting Madonnas, I fancy. (Can Simonetta be traced in any of them? I think not. The Sistine paintings extend from 1481 to 1484, however. I cannot help thinking Zipporah is impressed with her.) After Savonarola's death, Sandro must have lost heart, and gone into Dante altogether. Most ways in literature and art lead to Dante; and this question about the nude and the purity of Botticelli is no exception to the rule.

"Now in the Purgatorio, Lust is the last sin of which we are to be made

[1] [See Vasari (vol. ii. pp. 385–386, Bohn): "Among other peculiarities of the scene, it is to be remarked that not only are rage, disdain, and the desire for revenge apparent in the men, but in the horses also; two of these animals, with their fore-legs intertwined, are attacking each other with their teeth, no less fiercely than do the cavaliers who are fighting for the standard," etc.]

## V

*Fragments on Holbein and others*

256. Of Holbein's St. Elizabeth,[1] remember, she is not a perfect Saint Elizabeth, by any means. She is an honest and sweet German lady,—the best he could see; he could do no better;—and so I come back to my old story,[2]—no man can do better than he sees: if he can reach the nature round him, it is well; he may fall short of it; he cannot rise above it; "the best, in this kind, are but shadows."[3]

. . . . . .

Yet that intense veracity of Holbein is indeed the strength and glory of all the northern schools. They exist

pure, and it has to be burnt out of us; being itself as searching as fire, as smouldering, devouring, and all that. Corruptio optimi pessima; and it is the most searching and lasting of evils, because it really is a corruption attendant on true Love, which is eternal—whatever the word means. That this is so, seems to me to demonstrate the truth of the Fall of Man from the condition of moral very-goodness in God's sight. And I think that Dante connected the purifying pains of his intermediate state with actual sufferings in this life, working out repentance,—in himself and others. And the 'torment' of this passion, to the repentant or resisting, or purity-seeking soul is decidedly like the pain of physical burning.

"Further, its casuistry is impracticable; because the more you stir the said 'fire' the stronger hold it takes. Therefore, men and women are *rightly* secret about it, and detailed confessions unadvisable. Much talk about 'hypocrisy' in this matter is quite wrong and unjust. Then, its connexion with female beauty, as a cause of love between man and woman, seems to me to be the inextricable nodus of the Fall, the here inseparable mixture of good and evil, till soul and body are parted. For the sense of seen Beauty is the awakening of Love, at whatever distance from any kind of return or sympathy—as with a rose, or what not. Sandro may be the man who has gone nearest to the right separation of Delight from Desire: supposing that he began with religion and a straight conscience; saw lovingly the error of Fra Filippo's way; saw with intense distant love the error of Simonetta's; and reflected on Florence and *its* way, and drew nearer and nearer to Savonarola, being yet too big a man for asceticism; and finally wearied of all things and sunk into poverty and peace."

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[1] [See above, § 164, p. 408; and, for the picture, Vol. XIX. Plate IV.]

[2] [See above, § 170, p. 414.]

[3] [See *Aratra Pentelici*, § 142 (Vol. XX. p. 300); and *Eagle's Nest*, §§ 39, 148 (above, pp. 152, 221).]

only in being true. Their work among men is the definition of what *is*, and the abiding by it. They cannot dream of what is not. They make fools of themselves if they try. Think how feeble even Shakespeare is when he tries his hand at a Goddess;—women, beautiful and womanly, as many as you choose; but who cares what his Minerva or Juno says, in the masque of the Tempest? And for the painters—when Sir Joshua tries for a Madonna,[1] or Vandyck for a Diana—they can't even *paint!* they become total simpletons. Look at Rubens' mythologies in the Louvre, or at modern French heroics, or German pietisms! Why, all—Cornelius, Hess, Overbeck, and David—put together, are not worth one De Hooghe of an old woman with a broom sweeping a back-kitchen. The one thing we northerns can do is to find out what is fact, and insist on it: mean fact it may be, or noble—but fact always, or we die.

257. Yet the intensest form of northern realization can be matched in the south, when the southerns choose. There are two pieces of animal drawing in the Sistine Chapel unrivalled for literal veracity.[2] The sheep at the well in front of Zipporah; and afterwards, when she is going away, leading her children, her eldest boy, like every one else, has taken his chief treasure with him, and this treasure is his pet dog. It is a little sharp-nosed white fox-terrier, full of fire and life; but not strong enough for a long walk. So

[1] [See Vol. XIX. pp. 4, 5, and Plate I. Vandyck's "Diana and Endymion" is at Madrid. For Rubens' "mythologies in the Louvre," see Vol. V. p. 135, Vol. XII. p. 473, and Vol. XIII. p. 39. For Cornelius, Vol. VII. p. 439; Overbeck, Vol. VII. p. 488, and Vol. XV. p. 157; and David, Vol. I. p. 278. For the kind of picture by De Hooghe described in the text, see Nos. 794 and 835 in the National Gallery; and for other references to the painter, see Vol. VII. p. 369 and *n*. For Heinrich Maria von Hess (1798–1863), of the Düsseldorf school, the painter of the frescoes in the Allerheiligen Hofkirche at Munich, see Vol. VII. p. liii., and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 5, where, as in previous editions here, the name has been misprinted "Hesse," although the reference is clearly not to any of the three French painters of that name.]

[2] [For another notice of these details in Botticelli's "Life of Moses," see Vol. XXIII.; and for Ruskin's first note of the dog, see above, Introduction, pp. xxvii., xxviii. A study of "Gershom's Dog," made in 1874, was No. 113 in the Ruskin Exhibition at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, 1901.]

little Gershom, whose name was "the stranger" because his father had been a stranger in a strange land,[1]—little Gershom carries his white terrier under his arm, lying on the top of a large bundle to make it comfortable. The doggie puts its sharp nose and bright eyes out, above his hand, with a little roguish gleam sideways in them, which means,—if I can read rightly a dog's expression,—that he has been barking at Moses all the morning and has nearly put him out of temper:—and without any doubt, I can assert to you that there is not any other such piece of animal painting in the world,—so brief, intense, vivid, and absolutely balanced in truth: as tenderly drawn as if it had been a saint, yet as humorously as Landseer's Lord Chancellor Poodle.[2]

258. Oppose to—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Holbein's | Veracity | —Botticelli's | Fantasy. |
| „ | Shade | „ | Colour. |
| „ | Despair | „ | Faith. |
| „ | Grossness | „ | Purity. |

True Fantasy. Botticelli's Tree in Hellespontic Sibyl. Not a real tree at all—yet founded on intensest perception of beautiful reality.[3] So the swan of Clio,[4] as opposed to Dürer's cock, or to Turner's swan.

The Italian power of abstraction into one mythologic personage—Holbein's death is only literal. He has to split his death into thirty different deaths; and each is but a skeleton. But Orcagna's death is one—the power of death itself.[5] There may thus be as much *breadth in thought*, as in execution.

. . . . . .

[1] [Exodus ii. 22.]

[2] [The picture is in the Duke of Devonshire's collection; the poodle belonged to Count D'Orsay. Engraved under the title "Laying down the Law."]

[3] [See above, § 221, p. 451.]

[4] [An early Italian engraving, one of the Tarocchi cards (vol. xii. No. 19 in the British Museum collection). For Dürer's cock, see above, p. 479 *n.*; for Turner's swans, above, pp. 45–46, and Plate VII.]

[5] [The reference is to various scenes in Holbein's series of the "Dance of Death," and to Orcagna's "Triumph of Death"; for references to which, see Vol. XII. p. 424.]

259. What then, we have to ask, is a man *conscious of* in what he sees?

For instance, in all Cruikshank's etchings—however slight the outline—there is an intense consciousness of light and shade, and of local colour, *as a part* of light and shade; but none of colour itself. He was wholly incapable of colouring; and perhaps this very deficiency enabled him to give graphic harmony to engraving.[1]

. . . . . .

Bewick—snow-pieces, etc. *Grey* predominant; *perfect sense of colour*, coming out in patterns of birds;—yet so uncultivated, that he engraves the brown birds better than pheasant or peacock![2]

For quite perfect consciousness of colour makes engraving impossible, and you have instead—Correggio.[3]

## VI

### *Final notes on light and shade*

260. You will find in the 138th and 147th paragraphs of my inaugural lectures,[4] statements which, if you were reading the book by yourselves, would strike you probably as each of them difficult, and in some degree inconsistent,—namely, that the school of colour has exquisite character and sentiment; but is childish, cheerful, and fantastic; while the school of shade is deficient in character and sentiment; but supreme in intellect and veracity. "The way by light and shade," I say, "is taken by men of the highest powers of thought and most earnest desire for truth."

The school of shade, I say, is deficient in character and sentiment. Compare any of Dürer's Madonnas with any of Angelico's.

[1] [For a summary of references to Cruikshank, see Vol. XIX. p. 77 *n.*]

[2] [See, in a later volume, Ruskin's "Notes on Bewick's *Birds*" (note on vol. i. p. 289).]

[3] [For Correggio as supreme in this respect, see *Lectures on Art*, § 177 (Vol. XX. p. 170).]

[4] [Vol. XX. pp. 127, 139.]

Yet you may discern in the Apocalypse[1] engravings that Dürer's mind was seeking for truths, and dealing with questions, which no more could have occurred to Angelico's mind than to that of a two-years-old baby.

261. The two schools unite in various degrees; but are always distinguishably generic, the two headmost masters representing each being Tintoret and Perugino. The one, deficient in sentiment,[2] and continually offending us by the want of it, but full of intellectual power and suggestion.

The other, repeating ideas with so little reflection that he gets blamed for doing the same thing over again (Vasari);[3] but exquisite in sentiment and the conditions of taste which it forms, so as to become the master of it to Raphael and to all succeeding him; and remaining such a type of sentiment, too delicate to be felt by the latter practical mind of Dutch-bred England, that Goldsmith makes the admiration of him the test of absurd connoisseurship.[4] But yet, with undercurrent of intellect, which gets him accused of free-thinking,[5] and therefore with undercurrent of entirely exquisite chiaroscuro.

Light and shade, then, imply the understanding of things —Colour, the imagination and the sentiment of them.

262. In Turner's distinctive work, colour is scarcely acknowledged unless under influence of sunshine. The sunshine is his treasure;[6] his lividest gloom contains it; his greyest twilight regrets it, and remembers. Blue is always a blue shadow; brown or gold, always light;—nothing is

[1] [For other references to Dürer's Apocalypse, see Vol. XIX. p. 260 *n.*]

[2] [Compare Vol. VI. p. 25, where Ruskin notes the want in Tintoret of "sympathy with the humour of the world."]

[3] ["Pietro had worked so much, and received such perpetual demands for his works, that he frequently used one and the same object or figure several times in different pictures; his theory and mode of treatment had, indeed, become so mannered, that he gave all his figures the same expression" (vol. ii. p. 321, Bohn).]

[4] [In his account of how the philosophic vagabond was taught to become a cognoscento: "The whole secret consisted in a strict adherence to two rules: the one always to observe that a picture might have been better if the painter had taken more pains; and the other, to praise the works of Pietro Perugino" (*Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. xx.).]

[5] [See above, § 185, p. 425.]

[6] [See Vol. VII. p. 410.]

cheerful but sunshine; wherever the sun is not, there is melancholy or evil. Apollo is God;[1] and all forms of death and sorrow exist in opposition to him.

But in Perugino's distinctive work,—and therefore I have given him the captain's place over all,[2]—there is simply *no* darkness, *no* wrong. Every colour is lovely, and every space is light. The world, the universe, is divine: all sadness is a part of harmony; and all gloom, a part of peace.

[1] ["The sun is God" were among Turner's last words (see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 45; and compare Vol. XII. p. 133.]

[2] [See above, § 72, p. 346.]

# APPENDIX

## NOTES FOR OXFORD LECTURES

I. STUDIES IN THE *DISCOURSES* OF SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS (1875)

II. READINGS IN *MODERN PAINTERS* (1877)

[*Bibliographical Note.*—The former of the two courses here included was announced in the *Oxford University Gazette* of October 15, 1875, as "Twelve Studies in the *Discourses* of Sir Joshua Reynolds." The lectures were delivered on November 2, 4, 6, 9, 11, 13, 16, 18, 20, 23, 25, and 27. The last lecture, which contained a description of the Spanish Chapel at Florence, was also delivered at Eton on the evening of November 27. Appreciations of the lecture (but no reports) appeared in *The Etonian* of December 2 and *The Eton College Chronicle* of December 15.

No report of the lectures has hitherto appeared, but a general account of them, with several notes of detached passages, is given in an article entitled "Ruskin as an Oxford Lecturer," by James Manning Bruce, in the *Century Magazine*, February 1898. Such of these passages as do not occur in Ruskin's MS. are given here on p. 506 (see also the Introduction, above, p. xli., and Vol. XX. p. xxv.).

The latter course was thus announced in the *Gazette* of October 12, 1877:—

"SUBJECT . . . LANDSCAPE PAINTING

"The course will consist of Twelve Readings in "Modern Painters," collecting the passages which the Author thinks likely to be permanently useful."

The lectures were delivered on November 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, 17, 20, 22, 24, 27, 29, and December 1.

Of these "Readings in *Modern Painters*," "some casual reminiscences" were given in Appendix I. of E. T. Cook's *Studies in Ruskin* (pp. 205–210). A few pieces from that account reporting passages not included in Ruskin's notes, are here added.

The last lecture of the course was published by Ruskin in the *Nineteenth Century*, January 1878 (vol. iii. pp. 136–145), under the title "An Oxford Lecture."

It was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. ii. pp. 369–388 (§§ 278–297); and again in the second edition of that work, 1899, vol. iii. pp. 379–399 (§§ 278–297). The paragraphs have here been renumbered.]

# I

# STUDIES IN THE "DISCOURSES" OF SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

## (1875)

### LECTURE I[1]

1. The course of study to which I to-day invite you, closes the work of six years which I have been permitted to carry forward in this University; and I am desirous, under the contingency either of its being thought desirable that some other teacher should succeed me, or that my own health should prevent my continuing in the responsibility of such office, that my addresses to you should close as they began,[2] with the words of the greatest of English painters. Nor should I hold my own work in any right sense accomplished unless I made not a few only of his words, but the substance of all, known to you in their simplicity and enduring truth as the only entirely classical teaching yet extant on the subject of art.

2. Classical, and for ever trustworthy, as the honest and passionate utterance of a great man who knew his business; and yet capable, as all noble scripture is, of being utterly misapplied and misunderstood; and in an age of decrepitude and wilful error in art sure to be misunderstood, and that more fatally in proportion to its real power and value. You have often heard it said of me that I contradict myself. I always accept the charge, and take pride in it.[3] Every great fact is established only by the statement of its contrary aspects. In my early work, I had to show the mischief which arose from obeying Sir Joshua, misunderstood. In my late work, I have to show the good which is to be found in his teaching, read as it was meant.

[1] [Delivered on November 2. Ruskin headed this MS. "The Introductory Lecture on Sir Joshua with the Tailor's Bill in Slang" (see p. 496).]

[2] [See the references to Reynolds in Ruskin's Inaugural Course, *Lectures on Art*, §§ 48, etc. (Vol. XX. pp. 14, 56, 98, 118, 119, 136, 170).]

[3] [See Vol. XVI. p. 187, and Vol. XVIII. p. 515 *n.*]

3. That you may see how little I shrink from the charge of self-contradiction, hear this passage respecting Sir Joshua from the third volume of *Modern Painters*. . . .

> [The passage is at the end of § 2, ch. iii. (Vol. V. p. 46): "Nearly every word that Reynolds wrote was contrary to his own practice; he seems to have been born to teach all error by his precept, and all excellence by his example," etc.]

Now that is absolutely true. He seems to have been born to teach all error by his precept; but that is because the only errors that were to be found in his precept, were seized upon as its essence by scholars determined to err.

4. There were two errors, inevitable by Sir Joshua, under the conditions of his time—errors not harmless even to him, but utterly deadly and ruinous when deliberately adopted as the principles of his teaching by a debased following school.

These two errors were, the first, that grace and dignity in composition might be learned by studying the works of old masters, instead of naturally arising from personal character; and that by academical study, figures might be painted in religious and heroic attitudes by students who have never felt or understood a religious or a heroic emotion.

That was an entirely deadly and horrible error, but inevitable by Sir Joshua under the conditions of his time. He does not himself fully see or understand it, and consciously does not make it: there are noble passages which contradict it. But the gist of his teaching has been distinctly to that effect.

5. The second error, inevitable also, is that the painting of minute detail is inconsistent with grandeur of effect and with heroic dignity.

That error was inevitable by Sir Joshua, because he had never seen minute detail executed with affection, as by the early Florentines; he had only seen it executed for mean vanity by the late Dutch. He concluded that there could be no detail except—I now use my own words, not his—by men who could only paint the spicula of haystacks and the hairs of donkeys.[1] He had never seen detail used to paint the separate rays of sunshine in Paradise, or the plumes of its angels' wings.[2] He pronounced all detail to be childish and vulgar, and the artists who followed accepted this excuse to ignore whatever he told them of the necessity of industry. They set themselves, as they supposed, at his bidding to obtain superficial grace and vacant magnitude, nobleness without morality, and creation without care. This gospel of the insolent and the idle became the gospel of the painters of England, and I now address you from this chair, because there is not a painter in England to take my place.

6. I wish you therefore to permit me to fulfil my duty by reading the instructions of this greatest of England's artists to you, pointing out only the places where these errors occur or are implied, and fastening the rest

[1] [See Preface to the second edition of *Modern Painters* (Vol. III. p. 24).]

[2] [The reference here is to a discussion of Botticelli's "Coronation of the Virgin," in the course of 1874 on "The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence" (now for convenience of subject printed in the next volume); for another reference to it, see below, p. 502.]

for you in their pure stability and serenity of truth. Let me briefly in the outset indicate to you how the existence of such error was inevitable in Sir Joshua's time and circumstances.

I was asked—of a young painter—if he would prosper. My answer was, "I fear he will get into London society, and then it's all over with him." Now, I have to point out as one of the chief and entirely conclusive advantages possessed by Sir Joshua—that he was never out of London society. [He associated] with the best men and loveliest women in England, but associated with them not as their equal, but on the terms expressed in this letter.

. . . . . .[1]

Only, the difference between Reynolds and Turner, so far as the one is always refined and the other often vulgar, was owing essentially to Turner's being bred in Covent Garden, and Sir Joshua's being taken to the Mediterranean by Admiral Keppel.[2]

7. But in London society at a particular period—that which produced among much ruin and unworthiness a special condition of modest and domestic character which Sir Joshua painted, as distinguished from Homeric Heroism on one side and Dutch churlishness on the other. But this exact balance was, observe, in process of time not in precision of choice. English society was at that moment exactly half-way in its fall from heroism, Gothic Heroism, into Dutch churlishness; and its taste or gravitation was downward; it wore ruffles and rapiers, but it bought pictures of cattle. Its manners were still those of the court of Elizabeth, but its tastes were the tastes of a stable-boy.

Briefly so, generally so, with grand exceptions, but from that day to this, English society has fallen lower and lower, and therefore now its nobles are gradually abdicating their ancient seats, and leaving them to manufacturers, and these manufacturers in turn will have to leave them to shopmen, and the taste of the stable-boy has become the taste of the haberdasher; and the taste of the honest haberdasher, the taste of the swindling one. How much further we may fall remains to be known; but I will show briefly of what nature the fall is.

8. I will show you this in the art of language. I will read you a piece of the language of English gentlemen trained in the English court, and a piece of the language of English swindlers trained in the English shop. We are day by day less honouring God and the King, day by day more honouring the Devil and the Shop, and you shall hear the languages of both in purity; and as their language is, so all their other art.

[1] [Here the MS. has "Work out that afterwards." "This letter" is probably the one to Lord Edgcumbe which is given in Northcote's *Life of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 2nd ed., 1818, vol. i. pp. 34–36. For other references to Reynolds as the painter of "May-fairness," see Vol. XIX. p. 5.]

[2] [For Turner's "Education" in Covent Garden, see Vol. VII. p. 377. By Lord Edgcumbe Reynolds was introduced to Captain Keppel, who, knowing the young painter's desire to visit Italy, took him to the Mediterranean on board the *Centurion* in 1749. Reynolds's portrait of Keppel is No. 886 in the National Gallery.]

[Here Ruskin read, first, the 71st Psalm from Sir Philip Sidney's Psalter (for which see *Rock Honeycomb* in *Bibliotheca Pastorum*), and then the handbill advertisement of a tailor in the East End of London, describing himself as the "champion kicksies builder," his produce as "slap-up tog," and his terms as "ready gilt—tick being no go."]

9. Here you have the difference between the art in language of a gentleman and a scholar, and the art of an illiterate clown. Of the method of degeneracy I must not to-day prolong discussion, for an hour ago I received intimation of a hope, rendered almost certainty by the patronage of the Prince[1] whose presence among us has been to all so kindly, gracious, and wisely helpful, that the Schools of Art here in Oxford may soon be able to take their true duty and place with other schools in conferring honour on their students. In such hope let me read to you with peculiar appositeness the thanks rendered by Sir Joshua in this first discourse[2] for the Royal help which then truly began the influence continued to this hour, and now, I trust, after such pause as is necessary in all human work, gradually to receive new power and happy accomplishment.

## NOTES FOR THE REMAINING LECTURES

[RUSKIN'S MS. becomes after the first lecture too fragmentary for any reconstruction to be attempted. The main thread running through the lectures consisted of readings from the *Discourses*, with criticisms by the way. Ruskin, as was his wont, showed a large number of pictures and photographs, and the lectures ranged over a wide field. Thus the last lecture of the course consisted for the most part of a description of the Spanish Chapel (afterwards used in *Mornings in Florence*).

The lectures were almost entirely delivered extempore, the MS. consisting only of memoranda; but passages here and there were written out, and some of these are now printed. They consist, first, of notes upon Sir Joshua Reynolds; secondly, of *obiter dicta* on various subjects; and, thirdly, of two detached sentences which are worth preserving.]

### [*Notes upon Reynolds*]

11. There are three lives or forms of life. As Plaster of Paris is made of lime and sulphur and oxygen, so Plaster of Man—the Gypsum of the Mont Martis[3] of humanity—is made of clay, the animal part, the sulphureous

[1] [Prince Leopold: see Vol. XX. p. xxxv., and Vol. XXI. p. xxiii. It does not appear what scheme Ruskin here referred to; perhaps to the Prince's sympathy in some such scheme of enlarging the scope of the University School of Art, as explained in his memorandum of 1877 (see Vol. XXI. pp. xxiv.–xxv.).]

[2] [The First Discourse was delivered at the opening of the Royal Academy, January 2, 1769, and Reynolds said, "We are happy in having a prince, who has conceived the design of such an institution, according to its true dignity; and who promotes the arts," etc.]

[3] [So some derive the name of the Parisian Montmartre.]

and Diabolic part, and the Oxygenic or ætherial part. With his own chemistry man may magnify any one of those against the others.

12. First, the Animal part—purely unvisionary, growing, feeding, fading existence.

With the Lion's heart or the Lamb's, with the Vulture's heart or the Lark's, with the Pig's heart or the Shark's. Always in all three cases no more than a beautiful bird or an ingenious beast. And he may be very grand as a beast when he is of noble race; go very far as a beast, up to Cœur de Lion, but not up to St. Louis; up to John Bull, but not up to St. Benedict;[1] up to Sir Joshua Reynolds, but not to Giotto.

Says Goldsmith in "Retaliation": "Reynolds—is lamb."[2] All his life the innocentest, dearest of men, painting the best and sweetest living things of the beasts about him that he can see, and directing you, on needful occasions, how to drape them and make them behave, that they may look like patriarchs and prophets.

13. Well, you have had another delightful artist lately, much smaller but a true artist, a man with the heart of a lark—Mendelssohn. The sweetest, most animated, most trillingly musical of living creatures—a perpetual warble; he warbles and trills his way through Italy, sees no more in Italy than a migrating butterfly might, understands no more. Everything is delicious to him—churches and costumes, and conversation and pictures, and music and sentiment. And how beautiful Religion is, for a thing to pipe and fiddle about! And how grand St. Paul is, for majestic recitative! and Elijah—what themes of picturesqueness, what pathos, and choral majesty of priests of Baal! and the Psalms—what endless topics in them for musical contrast! He takes up, for instance, the 55th Psalm—quite one of your favourite anthems here in Oxford. Yes, thinks the little man—who never in his life had the least notion of remaining in the wilderness; who never was oppressed by the wicked, but petted by the pretty; who never heard the voice of an enemy, but of innumerable friends—how sweetly pensive may all this be in music.

"Give ear to my prayer," in softest bass. "I mourn in my complaint and make a noise"—a most sweet noise it shall be; and after everybody has been moved to the most delicious melancholy, then—what a lovely psalm it is—to bring in something deliciously lively, "Wings of a dove"—all love letters and dew of course; now we turn on all the trebles, and away we go.[3]

Now, gentlemen, I assure you the less sentimental play you have of that kind the better for you. The Psalms of David talk of matters of life and death. If you don't believe them, or don't want them, let them alone; deny them, defy them, if you will, but don't play with them like piping bullfinches play with their mistresses' hair. Very good, very deeply feeling

[1] [For Cœur de Lion and St. Louis as types, see Vol. XIX. p. 392, and the passages there referred to. Ruskin's study of St. Benedict is given in "Mending the Sieve" (*Our Fathers have Told Us*).]

[2] [Quoted also in *Two Paths*, § 64 (Vol. XVI. p. 309).]

[3] [For notes on Ruskin's delivery of this passage, see above, Introduction, p. xli.; and for other references to Mendelssohn, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 24, and *Præterita*, iii. § 84. With this passage compare one in the additional lecture now appended to *Love's Meinie*.]

people do it. I heard of a lady the other day who sets the Apocalypse to music. But it falsifies all their nature, and deafens them to all vital command of spiritual truth.

14. But though you mustn't, if you mean to remain animals, play with psalms, you may play with things pleasant to animal nature—shining, melodious, and glittering—as much as you please. You have, then, the flowers gathered to be a garland; the flowers enclosed for a park; the birds concentrated in a pet macaw; the beasts, in a favourite horse; ancient mythology, to lean your elbow on in a graceful manner; and modern Christianity to assure you that our felicity will never end.[1] It was very charming, is very charming; but is, and was, only possible so long as the prophets and apostles were, as it was supposed, dead, and to be restored only even to imagination by ingenious cast of drapery. And while, therefore, the living prophets and apostles are silent, or rejected, of the rest that of Isaiah[2] is true: "The Prophets prophesy falsely, the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so, and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

15. Sir Joshua was here fatally—and in the supreme fatality of utter unconsciousness—in the misery of our modern conviction that it is wholly impossible to catch a patriarch or a prophet alive. He thinks virtually that patriarchs belonged only to the period of mammoths, and in their fossil state are animals distinguishable from others of the human species by their long beards, as the mammoth from others of the elephant species by its long hair. Similarly, Sir Joshua supposed that the end of all prophecy being arrived at in the divine existence of the English foxhunting squire, and his beautiful wife and his blessed little brood of laughing children, no prophet could be seen any more of men, but held now to have with the perfect squire only a distant holothurian connection,[3] and was distinguishable among extinct molluscous animals chiefly by the extent and the hairy covering of his mantle. Whereas the real fact is, if only you knew it, that you may see as thorough patriarchs as Abraham was any day, and as carefully visited by angels, sitting under their vine and fig tree[4] among Bassan's mountains,[5] and under their peat-covered skirling (?) among Burns'; and occasionally getting as drunk as Noah under both.[6]

16. Sir Joshua says what he thinks should be said, and is afraid to

[1] [Here, again, compare Vol. XIX. p. 5 (where Ruskin says that "Sir Joshua never trusts himself outside the park palings"); for a pet macaw, see *Love's Meinie*, § 87.]

[2] [In fact, Jeremiah; v. 31.]

[3] [See Vol. XI. p. 132.]

[4] [1 Kings iv. 25.]

[5] [The reference here is to a passage in the Fourth Discourse on Jacopo da Ponte, called Bassano (and by Reynolds sometimes "Bassan"), from his birthplace in the mountains near Venice. "The difference between Paolo and Bassano seems to be only," says Reynolds, "that one introduced Venetian gentlemen into his pictures, and the other the boors of the district of Bassano, and called them patriarchs and prophets."]

[6] [Genesis ix. 21. This allusion to Noah was introduced, no doubt, by way of exhibiting a study from the sculpture on Giotto's Tower: see *Mornings in Florence*, § 125.]

trust his own feelings. We get at them, in a little piece of him reported by Northcote.

> [Here Ruskin probably read the following passage: "Sometimes a painter by seeking for attitudes too much becomes cold and insipid. This is generally the case with those who would have every figure a fine action; they lose sight of nature and become uninteresting and cold" (Northcote's *Life*, vol. i. p. 42).]

He was afraid to trust himself because he felt something wanting in his own manner of portraiture, something cold and ignoble. And he had no conception of the real source of this weakness; he fancied it came from his liking of pretty things, of gold, of brocade, of flowers, of curls and feathers.[1] How he enjoys himself. And yet in all this despises himself. (The cold painter.) The "gusto grande" dispenses with all these things. In Michael Angelo the person is everything, the dress nothing.

17. Let us clearly understand the place that portraiture—this cold art—took in the eighteenth century.

During all the progressive ages of art the imagination of the painter was fixed on supernatural scenes. He desired to realize beings greater than himself. All his work was glowing and passionate, and his simplest figures had passionate meaning even in their repose. Theseus, or the Fates of the Parthenon, are in repose,[2] but it is repose which has achieved the deliverance of the earth, or which rules its destiny.

Sir Joshua's pretty lady is then for herself alone, feeling nothing in particular, aiming at nothing in particular; not a saint, not a heroine. The honourable, delightful, and beautiful Mrs. So-and-so—that is all.

That is eighteenth-century art. After a time people began to feel it dull.

The Reformation was all very grand and right of course, but having no martyrdom to bear, no stories of saints to tell, and one's own park as much Paradise as one cared for, life got stupid somehow, and portraiture itself tiresome.

One turned out one's toes, one fluttered and minced; still, one tired of all that in time. And then came gradually, through the drama and opera, nineteenth-century art, in which plain pure portraiture is not, but all our clever painting is of dramatic misfortunes. We must not paint a pretty lady as an interesting saint, but we may as an interesting sinner. We may paint her having her head cut off—as Paul de la Roche; we may paint her being drowned, starving to death over a sewing machine; we may paint her parting with her lover on the eve of a massacre, or choking him to death in being carried up a hill.[3] Cold no longer, certainly; but still less inspired, except with the vapours of Death.

[1] [Here the MS. has a memorandum to the effect that an engraving of one of Sir Joshua's "pretty ladies" was to be shown: see below, § 17.]

[2] [Compare above, p. 95.]

[3] [The references here are to the French painter's "Execution of Lady Jane Grey"; and Millais's "Ophelia," "Stitch, stitch, stitch," "The Huguenot," and "The Crown of Love" (for which see Vol. XIV. p. 280). With the passage generally, compare the lecture on "Modern Art" in Vol. XIX. p. 203, where Ruskin discusses the "desire of dramatic excitement."]

18. Reynolds never suspected that there was a spirit in Michael Angelo that he had not—that no Englishman could have, in his day.

That this strange awe which he felt in his presence was not because Michael Angelo denied himself the trivial delights of sense, but that he possessed the mighty joy of spirit, which had come down to him through three hundred years of honour rendered by the arts of men to the God who taught them.

Because Michael Angelo, though the last of the Florentines to whom it was given, had the force Sir Joshua knew not of—Inspiration.[1]

## [HISTORY, WRITTEN AND PAINTED]

19. The new lights of history. Now we are collecting materials and obtaining the possibility of clear views. But don't think you have got any clear views yet or can get them, but on one condition, extreme modesty, extreme decision of principle, and extreme negation of all theory.

(A.) Extreme modesty. I think the impudence of the modern Cockney mind is more shown in its attempt to write history than in anything else: Mr. Buckle's *History of Civilization!*[2] Why, a cock sparrow bred in Tower Ditch might as well think it could write the History of the Tower.

History of Civilization! The toil and martyrdom of all the great souls that God has made since the beginning of His creation; and this winter-cricket with only a chirp between his creaking legs at the fireside—he will write the history of the heaven and all its eagles!

Remember that no mortal of you is able to write history at all, or understand a single event of it, unless he can understand the motives and the movements of the strongest minds of men, and has sympathy and passion scarcely less than theirs. I only know four bits of perfect history in the English language—Shakespeare's *Coriolanus, King John, Richard the Second, Henry the Fourth.* In modern days in English there are only two pieces of history yet extant—Carlyle's *Cromwell* and *Frederick.* His *French Revolution* is next to them, but he had not sympathy enough with the French mind. Of other history there is as yet none.

(B.) You think you can get at the facts, do you?—know what really happened, how such and such a piece of policy came about, such and such a war. Will you have the goodness, first, to write the history of your native village, and find out the real truth about that little business between Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Robinson the other day? Then go and write the history of kings and queens, though you may be behind the tapestry forsooth, Mr. Niebuhr,[3] half Polonius, half rat.

[1] [Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 45, where Ruskin says that Reynolds, "though he ends his last lecture with 'the *name* of Michael Angelo,' never for an instant thought of following out the purposes of Michael Angelo."]

[2] [Published in 1857–1861. For other references to the book, see *St. Mark's Rest*, § 31, and *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 45, 75, and 86; and compare below, p. 523.]

[3] [For another reference to Niebuhr's *Roman History*, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 21.]

Now, mind this, if you can before you die, any of you, find out and truly conceive the faintest image of the facts of ten years of the life of men in a single city of this earth, and the real nature of the best man in it of whom record is left, your life will have been well spent, and that though it must have been a thoughtful one to find out so much.[1]

But first, you must love and reverence Somebody very much. Love some one, some one creature, whatever you do—and love Truth more. Those are the two positive needs for an historian.

(C.) And the third negative need is that you should not love a theory, for that is loving yourself.

20. Now, I've worked for thirty years to know something of the deeds or arts of men and of their history. And I do know partially but truly the mode of life during about twenty years of the power of Florence, and I do know partially the mind of the solidest man in it, in those years—Giotto. And I do know him to have been the master of Orcagna, and through him of Michael Angelo; and the master of Taddeo Gaddi, and Simone Memmi (and through him of Angelico) and through both, of all the beautiful didactic art of Florence and of the world.

[Then followed the description of the frescoes attributed to Memmi (Martini) in the Spanish Chapel at Santa Maria Novella, than which, said Ruskin, there is "no other so perfect statement of the noble policy and religion of men" (*Mornings in Florence*, § 119[2]).]

## [REALIZATION AND IMAGINATION]

[These notes are headed "Notes for the 10th Lecture, 23rd Nov. '75." The lecture no doubt began with the reading of passages in which Reynolds declared particularity of dress patterns, and realization of detail, to be incompatible with the grand style. Ruskin proceeded, it will be seen, to name contrary instances, and to draw an essential distinction.]

21. Shield of Achilles and Hercules and Peplus ot Athena.

Dutch part of Italian Genius.

The best pure oil picture in the world without use of gold, John Bellini in Frari,[3] in which a whole chapter is written out in the book.

The most delightful and covetable, Carpaccio's Vision of St. Ursula.[4]

The absolutely greatest and rightest achievement of all power, Sandro

[1] [So when Mr. Malleson (Vicar of Broughton-in-Furness) sent some sheets of his *Life of Christ*, Ruskin replied, "I think it would have done more good if you had written the lives of two or three of your parishioners" (see the letter of July 30, 1879, in a later volume).]

[2] [The lecture for which these notes (§§ 19, 20) were written was the last of the course, and was repeated on the evening of the same day (November 27) at Eton.]

[3] [See above, *The Relation between Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, § 10 and *n.*, p. 83; the book is held open by the saint on the right.]

[4] [See the description of the picture in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 20.]

Botticelli's Crowning of the Virgin, in which every ray of the sunshine is separately gilt and burnished as it comes down between you and the face of the Archangel Gabriel.[1]

Fine dress, because you can't paint anything else, or because you mean to do everything in your picture well.

22. But there is a higher reason than this of completion. The desire of absolute Realization. To make you see the spiritual creatures completely, as the painter himself saw them.

Now, I told you that what another author would call his system, runs through twenty books.[2] I tell you, first, it's not mine; secondly, it is not a system, but a series of truths which you may for yourselves find.

Of which, this is the first. That the power of Imagination—that is to say, of seeing images which are not substantial—is not a morbid faculty to be played with, but the healthiest and highest of all human faculties, to be most solemnly cultivated. That it is with that we see the highest and most important, namely, the spiritual truths of the universe.

23. We see them, observe. Now, first, be sure of this, this Imagination is distinct sight, and distinct hearing, only of things which other people don't see, and which are therefore, according to the notions of other people, not there.

Now this power of visionary sight and hearing is absolutely healthy, when the flesh through which it works is healthy; and absolutely diseased, when the flesh is diseased.[3]

24. You will understand this best by the properly Socratic method of examining it first in simplest things.

One day in the spring of 1863 I got a great fright about my eyes. I had eaten rather a large breakfast, and climbed the limestone mountain between Annecy and the Tournette rather fast. At the top I was stooping down to look at the lichens of it for about ten minutes, and when I raised my head, behold all the sky was covered with stars flying about like fireflies, only brighter than fireflies, very bright indeed, and immensely pretty. This unexpected illumination lasted about half a minute, and then, to my great satisfaction, faded away. But I got a terrible fright, and thought I was going to have amaurosis.

I have since to my much comfort ascertained by experience that this phenomenon is only a particular and brilliant form of biliousness.

25. Now a modern philosopher, who generalizes and reasons, and does not allow that anything is knowledge until you have got the law of it, would proceed, doubtless, to reason upon such an experience thus:—If the most brilliant stars which can be seen by daylight are only subjective, how infinitely more probable is it that the feebler stars which can only be seen at night are subjective. Human nature is subject to a constant law; if I am bilious, all mankind must be bilious, and all stars must be a manifestation of bile.

[1] [Here, again, see the lecture on Botticelli in *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence* (Vol. XXIII.); compare p. 494, above.]

[2] [This passage must, in the actual arrangement, have succeeded another which is here given below: see § 30, p. 505.]

[3] [Compare below, p. 527.]

Next, we will take a more distinctly spiritual vision, but of the corrupt flesh. Here is an example of nightmare which I put down the other day.

[Rough notes show that Ruskin then proceeded to give instances from art of "spiritual visions, but of the corrupt flesh," and of "foul visions."]

26. What is the kind of thing an entirely sane mind sees? Bright visions, from right management of body and mind. There are entirely sane and pure persons who can tell you.

Hear this of the pure soul:—

> "A thousand liveried angels lackey her,
> And in clear dream, and solemn vision,
> Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear,
> Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
> Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape."[1]

or this—

> "They watch, and duly ward,
> And their fair squadrons round about us plant:
> And all for love, and nothing for reward;
> Oh, why should heavenly God to men have such regard?"[2]

Hear also what St. John saith:—

[Probably Ruskin read from the first chapter of the Book of Revelation.]

27. Do you think the men who tell you these things didn't believe it? They much more than believe it—they know it.

You may know it also, if you will, and if you want to. Do you want to? Do you care to see angels? Do you care to know what they look like? how they are dressed? You know you don't. You young ladies, you want to have beautiful horses and riding dresses; and you, Oriel men, want to have a good boat and bump Corpus.

But if you do care, here is a telescope with a witness you have got, whose lenses you may polish and see better things than the Milky Way.

[The MS. next has "Astronomy of Giotto." Ruskin showed, no doubt, the figure of Astronomy on Giotto's Tower, describing it as in *Mornings in Florence*, § 126.]

28. First, then, don't play with it. Don't pull your telescope out and in, or pull it to pieces. But consider what you are told by Hesiod, by Homer, by Moses, by David, by Solomon, by Dante, by Plato, by St. Paul, by St. Francis, by all the Saints and their Master. And these persons, I assure you, are of respectable authority. Well, all these tell you two things—that there is real presence, and visionary or dream presence.

"He wist not that it was true which was done by the Angel, but thought he saw a vision."[3] Afterwards the same Apostle does see a vision of clean and unclean beasts. Instructive and divine, but not real beasts; the other was a real angel. So you are told.

[1] [Milton: *Comus*, 453.]

[2] [Spenser: *Faerie Queene*, ii. 8, 2; quoted also in *Academy Notes*, 1888 (Vol. XIV. p. 163). The MS. then has "Hesiod." Ruskin quoted perhaps passages from the beginning of the *Theogony*.]

[3] [Acts xii. 9, and ch. x. (not afterwards).]

So when Zacharias questions, the answer is, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God."[1]

So Tobit. ["I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One."[2]]

Or again, St. Paul sees in his conversion a real Christ; in his dream, a visionary man of Macedonia.[3]

Now, be sure, to begin with, that these sights are really seen sights, and that you may see them if you will, or the contrary of them, or nothing.

You may be blind all your life. You may have spiritual sight of Heaven, or spiritual sight of Hell, according as you wish.

29. That is the message of men; next for the message of things.

They also, the prettiest, are those you have to learn from—opals and jewels, not mud; flowers and leaves, not fungi and thorns; doves and birds of paradise, not rattlesnakes and frogs.

Whatever you learn by dissecting frogs, and galvanizing frogs, and so on, will be false knowledge. You will come to say, as Huxley did say,[4] "Has a frog a soul?" And you will gradually think you and the nations have no soul but a frog's.

And your Goddess of Wisdom will become Mrs. Leo Hunter, and your national poetry will become, what practically it has become, "The Ode to an *Expiring* Frog":—

> "Can I view thee, panting, lying
> On thy stomach, without sighing;
> Can I unmoved see thee dying
> On a log—expiring frog!"[5]

Or in terms which all honest men will take up more passionately:—

> "Shall I, helpless, brook thy thinking,
> Find no God to speed thy sinking
> Out of sight in Hades bog.
> Loathsome dust that once was log,
> Putrid skin that once was dog."

Dog, or worse than dog—dog-fish. For the change in the national hearts has been that foretold by Habakkuk—men have been made like the fishes of the sea, that have no ruler of them.[6] Look well at the dog-fish's eye, see how glazed it is, how dreadful in its blindness. A rattlesnake is the same; you can't appeal to it, it can't see you.

[1] [Luke i. 19.]
[2] [Book of Tobit, xii. 15.]
[3] [Acts ix. 3, xvi. 9.]
[4] [The reference seems to be to Huxley's paper, "On the Hypothesis that Animals are Automata, and its History" (*Fortnightly Review*, November 1874): see there pp. 565 *seq.*]
[5] [*Pickwick*, ch. xv.]
[6] [Habakkuk i. 14; quoted also in *Unto this Last*, § 46 (Vol. XVII. p. 63), and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 136 (Vol. XX. p. 293).]

## [ADMIRATION, HOPE, AND LOVE]

30. Nothing that I tell you is mine; it is either David's, or Dante's, or Solomon's, or Plato's, or Hesiod's, or Chaucer's.[1] But if I chose to set myself up for a system-monger, I can tell you neither Comte nor Mill nor Buckle have system so determined and arranged as mine; but mine now is not easy for you to get at all the branches of, for the writing of it occupies now some twenty biggish volumes, and these written with the best care I could have never to throw a word away.

But the teaching and main dividing of all that I have so written is given in one line of Wordsworth's: "We live by admiration, hope, and love."[2] Understanding always that the admiration is not of ourselves only, and the hope not for ourselves only. I do not add, the love not of ourselves only, for, often as we use the word, self-love is a contradiction in terms. Love *can* be only of others; only vulgar pride, vulgar indulgence, can centre in ourselves.

31. Admiration, hope, and love. The first volumes of this large series of systematic work were to communicate, if I could, the power of admiration; the books I am writing now are to communicate, if I can, what faculty I have of hope and of compassion. Those being, I know, and tell you of a surety, the three constituent strengths of the human soul—the threefold cord which cannot be broken, and which only Death can loose; the trefoiled lip of the vase for the water of life, which may be broken only when it is needed no more at the cistern.[3]

Of these three strengths, however, the first, as a pleasure, is to many men an entirely unintelligible term. They not only don't admire or wonder at anything, but they struggle with violent and fantastic effort from the possibility of ever being made to wonder at anything. If only we can find out how it is—if we can show that it is perfectly natural, legal, couldn't be any other way—how delightful it will be to have done with astonishment. We are sure the universe is only a juggle; the eggs really were never made in that blue bag of the sky. If we can but find out where the fellow gets his eggs, we shall be all right — never astonished any more.

32. And the gentlemen who use this language to you, observe, never had so much faculty of admiration as to account for their being so extremely uncomfortable under the little they have got. Your canary bird, says Carlyle, can only hold its own quantity of astonishment;[4] it is strange that your philosophical canaries cannot digest so extremely small a quantity.

His name shall be called Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Mighty Lord, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.[5] Nay, all this shall be so no

[1] [Compare *St. Mark's Rest*, § 209, where Ruskin says that his only system is "abhorrence of all that is systematic instead of useful," and that no true disciple of his will ever be a "Ruskinian."]

[2] [See Vol. XVI. p. 154; Vol. XVII. p. 105.]

[3] [See Ecclesiastes xii. 6.]

[4] [See Vol. XVIII. p. xl.]

[5] [Isaiah ix. 6.]

longer, say the canaries; His name shall be called "Just what we expected," the Natural Consequence, the Conservation of Force, and the Prince of Competition.

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33. Recognition of Order. To see design and trace it, the great human faculty.

Beginning of order is breaking into waves—Vibration: fall of cataract. This order of the peacock's feather[1] is the finest possible of vibrations—lustrous waves fastened for ever—a golden glacier, with musically measured crevasses, a cascade of perpetual fire.[2]

34. Or compare the roughest, cruellest Indian hunter, proud of squaw and scalp, laborious, dextrous, able with the strength of his right hand at least to feed his squaw, to win his scalp; compare him with the modern youth of the civilized city—"il ne faut que de l'argent" the one idea under his scalp—keeping his harlot with what he begs from his mother, dressing himself like a gentleman with what he filches from his employer, sodden, stupid, shameless, Godless, lifeless—a fanged but handless spider, that sucks, indeed, and swells, but cannot spin![3]

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[The following are some additional *obiter dicta* delivered in the Course on Reynolds, as reported in the *Century Magazine* (see above, p. 492).]

The power of great men lies in subjection; Sir Joshua Reynolds attributes his power to seeing the will of God, and not opposing to it any will of his own.

Only in the sure knowledge of our Lord and of His law is the sureness of any human action, in conduct or in art.

Religion is a submission, not an aspiration; an obedience, not an ambition, of the soul.

We have the habit of thinking our own opinions law, instead of recognizing a law in the will of our Creator. We judge the truth of God by our opinions instead of *vice versâ*.

According to the new theology, it is unnecessary to obey God, but entirely proper to repose upon Him.

Modern scientific men suppose that their prayers take God by surprise.

The object of all great artists is to make you forget their art and themselves, and believe in and love their subject.

The power of distinguishing right and wrong, called, when applied to art, *taste*.

The art-students of Rome now make ditches of themselves for the defunct rubbish of the past.

Vile artists, like Gustave Doré, love shade and death.

Ghiberti worked without love; his art is cold.

[1] [Here Ruskin may have shown the water-colour drawing of a peacock's feather, which is No. 116 in the Reference Series at Oxford.]

[2] [The MS. adds, "Then my snow"—showing that the lecturer read his description in *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. pp. 445–446).]

[3] [This (says Mr. Bruce, who reports the last part of the passage) "with an intensified sibilation that made the whole sentence a hiss."]

I am, I believe, the only person here in Oxford who says he has got something entirely definite to teach.

The British Constitution, of which you are so proud,—why, it is the vilest mixture of humbug, iniquity, and lies that Satan ever spewed out of hell.

Instead of "England expects every man to do his duty," we are receiving and acting on the watchword "England expects every man to do the best he can for himself."

[On the "horror of great darkness" that fell upon Abraham waiting for a sign from the Lord.] Indigestion, most likely, thinks modern philosophy. Accelerated cerebration, with automatic conservation of psychic force, lucidly suggests Dr. Carpenter. Derangement of sensorimotor processes, having certain relations of nextness, condescendingly explains Professor Clifford. Well, my scientific friends, if ever God does you the grace to give you experience of the sensations either of horror or darkness, even to the extent your books inflict on them on my own tired soul, you will come out on the other side of that shadow with newer views on many subjects than have yet occurred to you, novelty-hunters though you be.

There is no temptation to folly; a man has no business to be an ass.

Teach no church catechism; teach only the Mosaic law and the love of God. It is a vice of mine, in the fear of not saying strong things strongly enough, to use a violence of language that takes from their strength; but this is my calm and cool conviction: I tell you, without a note of excitement in my voice or manner, in language of absolute and tamest moderation, as I stand quietly here with my arms hanging at my sides, unless you teach your children to honour their fathers and their mothers, and to love God, and to reverence their King and to treat with tenderness and take care of kindly all inferior creatures, to regard all things duly, even if they have only a semblance of life, and especially such as God has endowed with the power of giving us pleasure, as flowers—unless you teach your children these things you will be educating Frankensteins and demons.[1]

[1] [Another passage is given in the same article, but it occurs also in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 65.]

II

# NOTES FOR THE LECTURES CALLED "READINGS IN 'MODERN PAINTERS'"

(1877)

## LECTURE I[1]

1. ALL living artists contradict whatever I say; and see what fatal impediment that puts in the way of my use to you.

The Professor of Mathematics at Paris and Vienna doesn't contradict your professor here.

The Greek scholars of Berlin do not contradict the Dean of Christ Church; the Professor of Medicine in Paris agrees in most points with Dr. Acland; and you can believe, and *do* believe, what they all say. But you will hear a separate theory from every art professor in Europe, and every one of their theories, however disagreeing among themselves, are in unison of opposition to me. I am alone against all the host of them.

For I have mainly said three things:—

(I.) That the life of Art is in religion.

(II.) That the food of Art is ocular and passionate study of Nature —ocular, especially as opposed to microscopic.

(III.) That the health of Art is in the humility and poverty of the artist's life.

2. The contradictions:—

To (I.)—that the life of Art is in religion—it is asserted that the life of Art is in sensuality.

To (II.)—that the food of Art is ocular and passionate study of Nature —it is asserted that the food of Art is a telescopic, scalpellic, and dispassionate study of Nature.

*I* say, if you want to paint a dog, love him, and look at him; they say, if you want to paint a dog, vivisect him first, and boil all the flesh off his bones afterwards.

[1] [Delivered on November 6.]

To (III.)—that the health of Art is in the humility of the workman's life—they say—and all the world thinks—that the health of Art is in the pride and riches of the workman's life.

3. But there's a fourth contradiction, worse.

Observe all these contradictions, though they deny the dependence of art on good, do not deny the being of good.

Art may be independent of religion, yet there is religion; and of virtue, but there is virtue; and of humility, but there is humility.

But now a fourth and exhaustive contradiction has to be fought, which is a little too much for me.

[The fourth contradiction will be found in § 9, and again in § 16, but Ruskin here diverged to explain the general subject of his course, and gave first a "General Sketch of the Book: Written in Praise of Turner."]

4. The first volume was an expansion of a long letter in defence of Turner. About 1840 a marked change took place in Turner's style. The change is to be seen in the *Rivers of France*, and was from yellow and grey to truth in colour. The central idea of the defence of Turner, as contained in *Modern Painters*, was that sight depends on the soul, and that I have shown you to be entirely true.[1]

5. The contents of this book are generally, as I say, right. I'm not ashamed of them, but I am ashamed of its systematization, which is affected and forced.

I am ashamed now,[2] I say, of the affected style of the volume. Subsequently I read Carlyle, and succeeded in catching something of his rhythm. I am ashamed, too, of my pretended systems. Plato threw out systems like the gleam on foam; Herbert Spencer throws them out like boys blowing bubbles full of dirty air. My system of "Ideas of Power, Truth, Beauty, and Relation" was wrong too in denial of the delight in "ideas of power." Veneration, desire for exertion, and sympathy are all involved in "ideas of power," and are all legitimate elements of delight.

*Now* I should say quite plainly a picture must first be well painted; secondly, must be a true representation; thirdly, must be of a pretty thing; fourthly, must be of a pretty thing which there was some rational and interesting cause for painting.

[Ruskin then gave some illustrations of his three leading principles and of their contradictions; the two following sections (§§ 6, 7) are supplied from *Studies in Ruskin*.]

6. The health of Art consists in the humility of the artist. I have in my possession Turner's receipt for £28, 7s., paid for three drawings of Florence. One of these would now fetch from £500 to £800. The high prices now paid for pictures are the cause of the hurry in modern work. A man can resist a bribe of nine guineas, but not so easily one of £2000. Even here in Oxford the leaven of pride and riches is at work. The peace of Isis is disturbed by shouts of ambition, and all ambition is

[1] [§ 4 is inserted from *Studies in Ruskin*.]

[2] [The passage "I am ashamed . . . elements of delight" is added from *Studies in Ruskin*, the memoranda in the MS. being "Bubbles. Ideas of Power, Truth, Beauty, and Relation."]

shameful. No natural beauty can be seen through a shameful passion. It was want of compassion which often made me fail to appreciate Turner's work, for he painted always in pity or joy.

7. The food of Art is the ocular and passionate study of Nature. The pleasure of modern science is the pride of seeing more by instruments than common people can with the naked eye. Of the two dominant schools in the University, one despises Nature, the other despises God. Man's eye sees through his soul. But nowadays sight has become mechanical. Ideas of power have become mechanical too. The thing you like in dancing is row. You can put on a mechanical University boat; you would have it to go like a watch—no beating of oars, nor anything wrong with the sliding seats—and you might race it against the Cambridge machine, and bet upon it. Well, the difference between what you would feel about it then and now is all the idea of power.[1]

Again. In Ealing cemetery I hear a tolling machine has been set up at the cost of £80, and the sexton, like a miller at his dam, turns on the lamentation.[2]

8. Well, next of course you will soon have steam organs and singers, and turn on your cathedral service.[3] But when you come to poetry, as well as music, you are at last stopped. You can't turn on your Tennyson. But suppose you could, suppose you could produce *In Memoriam* sonnets by an ingenious combination of dictionaries, you wouldn't like it.

Well, you have very nearly succeeded in turning on painting. The photograph is entirely mechanical.[4]

Well, it seems to me that you would like it. You are trying to turn on Turner; you think photographs better than painting; you would fain, I believe, turn on Tennyson.

9. But of one thing I am sure, that you are trying with all your might to find out that you can turn on God. To take the idea of personal power out of creation; to destroy all art, from lowest to highest, and to substitute not merely mechanism — for there is ingenuity in mechanism—but blind force; nay, scarcely force, but the sticking of protoplasms to itself as of not merely ashes to ashes, but mud to mud.

Now I have no words, and shall not try to find any, to express the sense of horror I have at all this, and the paralysis it is to me, and destruction of hope of being of use. But I will at least show you, in what I read to-day, how steadily the assertion of the contrary of all this runs through my books from first to last, and that, whatever other changes or additions may have occurred in my teaching, in this it has been consistent and reiterated. I take first the introduction to the theoretic faculty.

[Ruskin here read § 8 ("Ideas of Beauty, how essentially moral") and § 9 ("How degraded by heartless reception") from ch. ii. sec. i. of the second volume of *Modern Painters* (Vol. IV. pp. 48–50).]

[1] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 100 (Vol. XX. p. 96).]
[2] [See *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 83 (Notes and Correspondence).]
[3] [Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 205.]
[4] [Compare Vol. XIV. pp. 358–359, Vol. XV. p. 353, and Vol. XIX. p. 89.]

## LECTURE II[1]

10. I am going to give you again the substance of my last lecture, which is the substance of the course I propose. But I have first to tell you, why this course of lectures on myself was needful. It was needful specially because *Modern Painters* itself is a lecture with no conclusion, and I have now to put the conclusion upon it.

It was a lecture with no conclusion, first, because I did not see my way to one; and, secondly, because I was not allowed to wait till I did. There were many things that puzzled me in Turner's life, and more that puzzled me in my own; and it seemed to me that what I was surest of in principle was obscurest in fact, and I was forced to finish the book while I was in this mess of thought, to please my father,[2] and very lucky it was that I *did* please him.

11. The way it came about was this — the first volume of *Modern Painters* was simply a long letter in defence of Turner against *Blackwood's Magazine*. But in the course of the letter I felt it would be desirable to make it a treatise, and that in order to make it a good one, I wanted more knowledge.

So I set myself to get more, and went to Italy by myself in 1845, and my man's work then began; of which I may ask any of you who are interested in it to observe, that from 1845 to 1860 I went on with more or less of public applause, and then in 1860 people saw a change come over me, which they highly disapproved, and I went on from 1860 to 1875 under the weight of continually increasing public recusancy and reprobation.

The years are exact if you care to notice them—

For fifteen years precisely my writings were thought praiseworthy.

For fifteen precisely, thought the reverse.

12. Then in 1875 another change came over me, and people are beginning to think again there may perhaps be something in what I say after all.

A change came over *me*, I have admitted at all those periods. But not over the message I had to bring. First, I gave it cheerfully, and everybody was pleased. Then I gave it indignantly, and everybody was disgusted. Finally, I have to give it deliberately, and in complete sum, and I think you are gradually beginning to see—as I only now quite begin to see myself—how from first to last it has been true.

13. Now the thing which I have especially to thank my father for is that he made me finish my book, without finishing it, leaving, as in Aladdin's palace,[3] one window which I could not fill—which I have only found the right colour to put into—since that last year of change, 1875.

[1] [Delivered on November 8. Ruskin's memoranda begin thus:—

"Reasons of disorder in lectures.
Roots of trees.
Liking to surprise.
Lectures ought to have indexes."]

[2] [See Vol. VII. pp. lv.–lvi.]

[3] [Compare Vol. IX. p. 307.]

He made me finish it with a very pathetic appeal. For fifteen years he had seen me collecting materials, and collecting and learning new truths, and still learning—every volume of the four pitched in a new key—and he was provoked enough, naturally, and weary of waiting. And in 1859 he took his last journey with me abroad; and when he came home, and found signs of infirmity increasing on him, and that it were too probable he might never travel far more, until very far, he said to me one day, "John, if you don't finish that book now, I shall never see it." So I said I would do it for him forthwith; and did it, as I could.

14. I finished it, I say, as I could, not knowing in reality what my own book was about. I fancied it was all about Turner—and the end of Turner's life had been a very sorrowful one[1]—and I felt that no one would now believe through him—my main subject—the first thing I had to make them believe, that all art depended on nobleness of life. I knew his life had been noble, but not in ways that I could convince others of, and it seemed to me that all my work had been in vain.

And this was, therefore, what I wrote, at the end of those fifteen years of labour, of my work and of him.

[Here Ruskin read §§ 13–16 ("What Turner might have done for us, had he received help and love, instead of disdain," etc.) of the last chapter of *Modern Painters* (Vol. VII. pp. 454–456).]

15. So I wrote in the last leaf but one of *Modern Painters* in the year 1860. I got this bound volume in the Valley of St. Martin's in that summer, and in the Valley of Chamouni I gave up my art-work, and wrote this little book,[2] the beginning of the days of reprobation.

Having wrought through them, I am enabled now to complete my old one. Looking back, I find that, though all its Turner work was right and good, the essential business of the book was quite beyond that, and one I had never thought of. I had been as a faithful scribe, writing words I knew not the force of or final intent. I find now the main value of the book to be exactly in that systematic scheme of it[3] which I had despised, and in the very adoption of and insistence upon the Greek term Theoria, instead of sight or perception, in which I had thought myself perhaps uselessly or affectedly refined.

16. I had no conception then that days would ever come when an honest and earnest natural philosopher would verily believe and, face to face with me, say that sight was altogether mechanical;[4] or when two parties would divide this great University, of which the one would look with scorn upon Nature, and the other upon her Maker; and build on the two opposite sides of the same road a college[5] and a museum, in which the collegians should be fearful of the questions of the Muse, and the votaries of the Muse proclaim in triumph: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, deceived in time past our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days *not* spoken unto us."[6]

[1] [The MS. contains at this point a characteristic note of a disturbance while he was writing: "Railroad whistle a quarter of an hour long."]
[2] [*Unto this Last*; for the writing of it, see Vol. XVII. p. xxi.]
[3] [*i.e.*, of the second volume.]
[4] [For this saying by Huxley, see above, *Eagle's Nest*, § 99, p. 194.]
[5] [Keble College, opened in 1870.]
[6] [Hebrews i. 1.]

17. Such days I have nevertheless lived to see, and such museum I have had hand in building,[1] and have seen it since filled with dead men's bones, and not only with the bones of men dead, but the bones of men dead by disease for chief subjects of this modern theoretic faculty. And therefore it is that to-day it is necessary for me to reassert not now the established fame of my dead friend, but the laws by which he laboured, and the light by which he saw; the light which now walketh in darkness, and the darkness comprehends it not.[2]

And thus the scheme of the course of teaching which I laid before you becomes necessary to the uttermost, and the reassertion with the true closing words of this book of its three main theorems—

That the arts of man are in his virtue, not in his vice.
That the eyes of man are of his soul, not of his flesh.
And that the glory of man is in his lowliness, not his exaltation.

18. And now as I have read you the end, so now I will read you a bit of the beginning of the fifteen years' work:—

[Here Ruskin read from the first chapter of the second volume of *Modern Painters* ("Of the Rank and Relations of the Theoretic Faculty"), emphasising especially (see Vol. IV. p. 86 *n.*) the passage in § 11, where he claims for the Theoretic and the Imaginative faculties "their true place for the intellectual lens and moral retina by which and on which our informing thoughts are concentrated and represented."]

"Intellectual lens, and moral retina"—the lens faithfully and far collecting, the retina faithfully and inwardly receiving. I cannot better the expression.[3] The full meaning I will endeavour to show you in next lecture.

## LECTURE III[4]

[Ruskin notes the subject of this lecture as "Language of *Unto this Last*." He began with reading a celebrated passage from *The Seven Lamps* (ch. vi. § 1, Vol. VIII. pp. 221–224), and recalled the pains which he took over the alliterations in "Those ever springing flowers and ever flowing streams had been dyed by the deep colours," and so forth. He now wrote, he said, in a different style, and "people don't like my present style."]

19. The explanation of the difference is a very essential part of my work here; for the art of language is certainly one of the fine arts, and many of my readers, I observe, suppose I know no other, but at least most of them credit me with that.

Now all that I know about language, in a way so sure that I care to tell you it, was written, in the third of my inaugural lectures, as accurately as I could write it; and as this course is not to tell you new things, but

[1] [See below, pp. 523 *seq.*]
[2] [See John i. 5.]
[3] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 46 (Vol. XX. p. 55).
[4] [Delivered on November 10.]

to resume what I wish you most to remember, I will read you that passage for the second time, it being now seven years, and more, since I read it first.

[*Lectures on Art*, § 70 (Vol. XX. p. 76), the passage in which Virgil and Pope are cited as "two great masters of the absolute art of language." In reading it, Ruskin remarked that "Tennyson is really Virgil's match in voice but has not his compass, and therefore does not wear his gold so lightly—it loads him a little."]

20. "Masters of the art of language," but their art is always manifest. Now whenever art is visible there is a trace of insincerity, a certain degree of coldness. When there is perfect sincerity, the art, however magnificent, is never visible—the passion and the truth hide it. The drawing of the Greta and Tees, for instance, of Turner—my best—it looks as if anybody could have done it.[1] And in the best writing it will seem to you as if, whether it speak of little things or great, it couldn't have been said any other way.

21. Now the intense fault of all my early writing is that you know in a moment it is my writing; it has always the taste of me in it. But that is the weakness of me, or the insincerity. As I advance in life, and get more steady and more true, you don't see the manner so distinctly, but you will see the matter far more.

Now I will read you two very short but quite characteristic passages, fifteen years apart, for the one of which, at the time, I was much applauded; the second, nobody, that ever I heard of yet, cares about:—

"He who has once stood beside the grave, to look upon the companionship which has been for ever closed, feeling how important *there* are the wild love and the keen sorrow, to give one instant's pleasure to the pulseless heart, or atone in the lowest measure to the departed spirit for the hour of unkindness, will scarcely for the future incur that debt to the heart, which can only be discharged to the dust."[2]

22. Now, that is a true saying, and in the measure of me at that day a sincere one. But with my present knowledge of literature I could tell in an instant that the person who wrote that *never had so stood beside the dead*. I could be perfectly sure of it, for two reasons—the first, that there was in the passage feeling, and the melody that comes of feeling, enough to show that the writer was capable of deep passion; and the second, that being so capable, if he had ever stood beside his dead before it was buried out of his sight, he would never, in speaking of the time, have studied how to put three *d*'s one after another in *debt, discharged*, and *dust*.

23. Next, I will read you the passage nobody has cared about, but which one day many will assuredly come to read with care, the last paragraph, namely, of that central book of my life:—

"And if, on due and honest thought over these things, it seems that the kind of existence to which men are now summoned by every plea of pity and claim of right, may, for some time at least, not be a luxurious one;—consider whether, even supposing it guiltless, luxury would be desired by any of us, if we saw clearly at our sides

[1] [No. 2 in the Standard Series (Vol. XXI. p. 11, and Plate XXV.).]
[2] [*Modern Painters*, vol. i. pt. i. sec. i. ch. i. § 5 (Vol. III. p. 86).]

> the suffering which accompanies it in the world. Luxury is indeed possible in the future—innocent and exquisite; luxury for all, and by the help of all; but luxury at present can only be enjoyed by the ignorant; the cruellest man living could not sit at his feast, unless he sat blindfold. Raise the veil boldly; face the light; and if, as yet, the light of the eye can only be through tears, and the light of the body through sackcloth, go thou forth weeping, bearing precious seed, until the time come, and the kingdom, when Christ's gift of bread, and bequest of peace, shall be 'Unto this last as unto thee'; and when, for earth's severed multitudes of the wicked and the weary, there shall be holier reconciliation than that of the narrow home, and calm economy, where the Wicked cease—not from trouble, but from troubling—and the Weary are at rest." [1]

Now, first, that passage is better than the other because there's not any art of an impudently visible kind, and not a word which, as far as I know, you could put another for, without loss to the sense. It is true that *plea* and *pity* both begin with *p*, but *plea* is the right word, and there is no other which is in full and clear opposition to *claim*.

But there is still affectation in the passage—the affectation of conciseness. Were I writing it now I should throw it looser, and explain here and there, getting intelligibility at the cost of concentration. Thus when I say—

> "Luxury is possible in the future—innocent and exquisite—luxury for all and by the help of all"—

that's a remains of my old bad trick of putting my words in braces, like game, neck to neck, and leaving the reader to untie them. Hear how I should put the same sentence now:—

> "Luxury is indeed possible in the future—innocent, because granted to the need of all; and exquisite, because perfected by the aid of all."

You see it has gained a little in melody in being put right, and gained a great deal in clearness.

Then another and worse flaw in this passage is that there is a moment's incontinence in it—loss of self-command, and with that, of truth. "The cruellest man living could not sit at his feast, unless he sate blindfold." That is not true. There are persons cruel enough to eat their dinners whatever they see, but not many; and you may generally give such lively speakers as the Bishop of Manchester, at the Manchester banquet the other day, the full credit of not seeing much.[2]

24. But putting by these remains of the errors of my old manner, this writing of my central life is in all serious ways as good as I can do, and it contained at once the substance of all that I have had since to say. And it is good chiefly in this, that being most earnest in itself, it will teach

[1] [*Unto this Last*, § 85 (Vol. XVII. p. 114).]

[2] [The reference is to a speech at a banquet held at Manchester, to celebrate the opening of the new Town Hall, on September 13, 1877. Bishop Fraser criticised Queen Victoria very sharply for not coming to Manchester, and threatened that she might live to regret the day. This lively speech was the subject of much comment in the newspapers at the time. Ruskin seldom missed an opportunity of girding at the Bishop of Manchester, not on personal grounds, but as the head of a commercial diocese: see *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 10 and 84.]

you to recognise with greater clearness the truth of noble words. You might read the passage in Job, with which it concludes, again and again and yet lose the full meaning of it in its pathos: unless you were brought to some attentive pause, you might read it like a mere chant or dirge—

"For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest

"With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves;

"Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver:

"Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light.

"There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest."

But now read, and think of it—

"I should have slept: then had I been at rest."[1]

With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves; *desolate* great palaces on the heath, where the cottage has been swept away; great palaces in the city, whose crimes are the seed of death. Or with princes that had gold, that filled their houses with silver. Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been, they and their wealth also, no more. For there the wicked—cessaverunt a tumultu—have ceased from their raging; and there the weary—οἱ καμόντες[2]—are at rest.

25. Now in my next lecture I hope to show you a still greater difference between the second and the third method and meaning of my work than between the first and second; but to-day I will endeavour to apply what we have been saying to greater work than any of mine.

I have told you that great work never showed its art. The greatest of all becomes unconscious of it in its ease. I have brought you to look at to-day two pieces of art—Carpaccio and Walter Scott.

[The Scott was a manuscript of one of the Waverley Novels, remarkable for its freedom from correction. The remainder of the lecture was a discourse on Carpaccio's pictures of St. Ursula (see *St. Mark's Rest*).]

## LECTURE IV[3]

[Ruskin notes the subject of this lecture as "Contents of *Unto this Last*," and began with recalling the passage read at the last lecture, § 23.]

26. "Luxury, innocent and exquisite—luxury for all, and by the help of all," expanded into

"Luxury, innocent, because granted to the need of all; and exquisite, because perfected by their aid."

Now you might at first think I was wrong in speaking of luxury as of universal necessity.

[1] [Job iii. 13–17.]
[2] [Homeric word for the dead, those who have done their work.]
[3] [Delivered on November 13.]

Not so. All men have need of it—the poor as the rich—and need of it in five orders or heights—

1. Luxury in exercise.
2. Luxury in food.
3. Luxury in dress.
4. Luxury in hearing.
5. Luxury in seeing.

(1.) Luxury in exercise, and fully in labour and rest. That is to say, in healthy provocation of the freedom of our limbs and healthy repose, such as lying down after a long walk in clean sheets and lavender, and in a house where one likes to be.

(2.) Luxury in food. That you should have good bread, fruit, butter, meat, and wine, and be able to taste all these.

To be able properly to taste strawberries and cream is a virtue, and therefore a necessity. You are not perfectly human unless you know the full luxury of that. Most people gobble them, like pigs or blackbirds.

(3.) Luxury in dress. The pleasure of feeling that one is well and rightly dressed, and that people like to look at us. It is a beautifully delicate luxury this, chiefly the privilege and virtue of women; it is quite wonderful what an immense quantity of quite celestial pleasure a nice girl will get out of a pretty dress.

(4.) Luxury in hearing, which is both of music and literature and the things they relate, and on which I need not expatiate. And

(5.) Luxury in seeing, or in intellectual painting and the things it relates. Both these two last luxuries are of course nobler than the others; but the luxury of sight is of course the most extended and has the nobler sphere, for there is this great difference between music and painting, that while God leaves us in the earth for the most part to sing for ourselves, He Himself paints for us.

27. Now these luxuries are, I meant to say in this closing paragraph of *Unto this Last*, to be granted to all and perfected by all. We are to let the mill girl have the joy of exercise and the sweetness of rest. We are to give wholesome bread, milk, and fruit to the labouring man's children, pretty dress to his wife and daughters; but, above all, we are to give the luxury of hearing to the deaf, and the luxury of sight to the blind. For these, understood as they are spoken—in the spirit, not in the letter—are indeed the opening of the prison to them that are bound.[1]

28. I must not generalize farther to-day, but come at once to my special point, that as the colleges of this University were founded to bring the music of the Word of God to the ears of the youth of England, so the museum of this University was founded to bring the light and beauty and life of the works of God to their eyes.

Instead of which, while its whole space would not be enough to show the twentieth part of what it ought to show of the life of this world, half of that narrow space is given to display, and recommend to contemplation, the Devil's working in it through disease, and his triumph over it in death.

29. And here some of you will be eager to cry out against me for my

[1] [Isaiah lxi. 1.]

discourtesy, more for my theology, and perhaps more still for my bad taste.

Let me briefly answer these three counts.

I know positively that everything done in this museum[1] has been planned as conscientiously and executed as faithfully as ever work was by man. But precisely as I should ask Professor Rolleston[2] to express clearly and in public, if needful, anything in my work which, without my conceiving it, paralysed his, so I believe he will not think it other than dutiful in me to say in public, because I think it needful, why his work, without his meaning it, paralyses mine.

That is my answer to the count of discourtesy.

30. To any inculpation of my theology, I reply that it is antiquated, but I have seen no reason hitherto, and see less and less reason every day of my life, to doubt it.

31. And to the third count against my taste in that I prefer seeing an animal with its flesh and skin on it to seeing only its bones, and that whereas modern men of science declare a skeleton to be a beautiful thing, and that it should be put on the chimney-piece of the house, I say that it is an ugly thing, and should be kept in the cupboard of the house, if it can't be put out of it altogether. To this plea against my taste, I answer that whatever may be said of me and my fine-spun sentiments, I appeal finally always to practical common-sense; and the truth of human feeling may be ascertained at once by any of you who will ask the young lady, whose judgment he most values, to wear for his sake a bird's skeleton in her hat instead of its skin, and see what she will reply.

32. Not that even wearing its skin in her hat is a piece either of good taste or good morals; but as I have already gone the length, in *Fors Clavigera*, of calling the young ladies of the period, in this particular, disgusting little savages,[3] I will say no more to-day, except that the immorality of such custom is not in the cruelty of it only, but in the pride. The squire's daughter thinks she looks more like one with a kingfisher or a cockatoo in her cap, which a poor girl cannot get killed for her. Now the squire's daughter and the duke's, when it is time for them to show their state, rightly wear their chaplet of pearl or their coronet of gold; but in daily life their duty is to show what grace and fitness can do in dress which may be exemplary to all, and teach the peasant girl how she may be beautiful, honourable, and majestic, with only a riband to bind her hair, or a fern leaf to wreathe in it.

33. Howsoever, the debate between the anatomy of the bird and its plumage, for subject of pleasurable sight, would be closed in the answer to that one question, and the real usefulness of a museum may always be ascertained by the verdict of its simple and above all, its youthful visitors, or even its childish ones. With respect to whom, I will now ask leave to read to you—beginning, however, a little way back from the point at issue—the close of my lecture just given in Kendal, which related especially to

[1] [In the theatre of which the lectures were given.]
[2] [See above, *Ariadne Florentina*, § 111, p. 366.]
[3] [See *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 64.]

the need of giving scientific teaching in plain language, and scientific attention to plain things.

[The passage here read was afterwards printed, with some curtailment, in *Deucalion*, i. ch. xii. ("Yewdale and its Streamlets"). The additional passages are, in this edition, added in footnotes to that book. The last words of the passage are:—

"The spirit of God is around you in the air that you breathe; His glory is in the light that you see; and in the fruitfulness of the earth, and the joy of its creatures, He has written for you day by day His revelation, as He has granted you day by day your daily bread."]

34. "The joy of its creatures." I was watching only the other day out of my study window a couple of squirrels building their nest in one of my fir trees, and thinking, What a Christmas-tree that would be, if the little people of it also could be seen and their architecture. How much might be done in illustrating and explaining the habits of animals in a museum we have scarcely yet any idea, for though there are some admirably set up at the British Museum, I hear more and more scorn expressed there of their stuffed animals.[1]

35. And the real root of all this mischief is our confusing the office of the keeper of a museum with the occupation and function of a leader in science. The mistake is just as mischievous to the man of science as it is to the public. The good-nature of Professor Owen[2] opens his study door at the end of the mineral gallery to me at a word; but what perpetual harm and shortcoming must not his condescension in doing so cause to his own work. How much better for him to be undisturbed on Richmond Hill, or unfettered upon the Andes; and for me to be able to get at some commonplace person who can tell me where to find what I want in the cases, explain to me the simple matters which are all I want to know, without overpowering me with an agony of remorse at wasting his time, and who will take his tiny, proper, and patient pride neither in making discoveries nor writing books, but in not allowing a grain of dust to soil the tip of a feather.

36. The outcry against stuffed animals is all owing to our not having quiet force enough of this kind, and to the perpetually forgetting the eternal adage of Hesiod, "the half is better than the whole."[3] Shylock, prizing his love's ring, takes the Jew's view of extended value, and would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys;[4] it is only in the Jew's ignorance of the nature of value that we make our museum a wilderness of all the beasts on the earth. Show the perfect forms and natures of a few, and these especially the few which we have a chance of seeing alive afterwards, and put the whole management under the authority of men who love beasts, and if possible love them better than they do themselves.

[1] [At this time, it should be remembered, the National History collections (now transferred to a spacious Museum of their own at South Kensington) were still at Bloomsbury.]

[2] [For other references, see Vol. VIII. p. 72, and Vol. XIII. p. 118.]

[3] [*Works and Days*, 40: compare Vol. XVII. p. 114 *n.*]

[4] [Act iii. sc. 1.]

37. Of all the tragic losses of faculty which have occurred to my knowledge in recent times, those of the genius of Bewick[1] and of the intense energy and naturalist power of Edwards of Inverness,[2] are the most bitterly tragical.

You throw these men away, nay, worse, trample them down like dirt, you hinder and imprison your educated discoverer, and you encumber your galleries with dusty wreck of what twenty men's lives would not be long enough to look at, to entertain a tired workman on his Sunday afternoon, or a schoolboy on his holiday morning.

Why, I would undertake to set up a room for them, if I had Bewick or Edwards to help me, with two or three rats and mice, and the leavings of his day's sale at the nearest poulterer's, which should do more for essential education than the confused pillage of the continents of the world.

38. Rats and mice, I say, and not in the careless passionateness of old days, but the deliberate accuracy with which I chastise every word written for utterance here. Did you ever see a water-rat swim in clear water, and not want to see him do it again, nor wonder how he did it? Did you ever see a field-mouse balance itself on a stalk of wheat, above its nest? All the gymnasiums in London will show you nothing so beautiful. You know the taste of plovers' eggs; do you know the structure of a plover's crest? You know the flavour of a partridge wing, but until I had written two folio pages of close notes on the texture of its feathers the other day,[3] I had myself no notion how their pattern was made. Leavings of the poulterer's sale, said I? Why, I could fill all this museum with studies of a duck and drake, and a hen and chickens, and it should be more educationally useful than it is now.

## LECTURE V[4]

[Ruskin notes the subject of this lecture as "Against Bones," and he began with the following points:—

"To separate research from education. It may be shared, as an indulgence. Analyse a new mineral, describe that new flower, etc. But the work of the University, to *teach what is* securely known in a way that shall form character." The MS. then continues:—]

39. I should like to see two universities, one occupied in digesting all that was new, and the other in usefully and morally communicating all that was old. I pass these by—the mingling of research with education—as a mere accidental furor and calamity of the time, and I find fault with our museum, not at all as an insufficient means of investigation, for that it has no business to be at all, but I find fault with it only as not a sufficient means of presentation of our possessed knowledge.

[1] [See above, pp. 436, 456.]
[2] [Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 75.].
[3] [Printed in ch. vi. of the *Laws of Fésole:* see Vol. XV. pp. 399 *seq.*]
[4] [Delivered on November 15.]

40. Now when at the close of last lecture I said that I could fill it, if I had Bewick and Edwards to help me, with no more material than a few ratskins and catskins and a tomtit or so, perhaps you thought that I was going directly against the aphorism of Pope's I had just quoted,[1] that "A little knowledge was a dangerous thing," and you would fain have answered me on the instant that you did not want your museum, whether it could be done amusingly or not, to be filled only with ratskins and catskins.

To which objection, formed as I knew it must be in your minds, I attempted no reply at the close of my last lecture, though I had a quarter of an hour to spare. For the reply will take me more than a quarter of an hour to make, and will involve considerations which, I fain hope, [will take you] more than a few quarters of an hour to weigh.

41. When Pope wrote, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," he did not mean that the knowledge of a few things was dangerous, when compared with the knowledge of many, but that the perfect knowledge of no matter how few or how small was better than the imperfect knowledge of no matter how many or how great. And that the more, because perfect knowledge can always be had of a thing which it is our duty to know, and for the most part only an imperfect knowledge be had of things with which we have no business. So that the perfect knowledge is usually the sign of a man's having studied what he ought, and the imperfect, of his having studied just what he took a fancy to. Against which far-sought and necessarily shallow knowledge I warned my Kendal pupils, chiefly because it provoked waste of time in pursuit, and of brains in speculation, and recommended them, as I most strongly recommend you, the study of those things only respecting which speculation may rapidly and finally be ended by experiment.

42. For instance, and it is one I have often given,[2] the brains and the temper of the geologists of Europe have been spent—to what extent you know better than I—for the last half century in the debate whether the world was made by fire or water, and whether the pot it was stewed in, or the oven it was baked in, were five thousand or five millions of ages in the firing.

And at the end of all those disputes which remain still undecided, here is a little pebble in my hand, the commonest at once and the prettiest sort of pebble, which the Scottish sea makes its beach of, and the Scottish maid her brooch.

And there is not a geologist in the world nor a chemist, not one of you, the wisest sitting here, who knows anything whatever about it and the two stones in my hand.

> [At this point Ruskin read a passage from the fourth volume of *Modern Painters* (ch. xii. § 16: "The geologist plunges into vague suppositions and fantastic theories. . . . Truly the cloud lies dark upon us here!"): see Vol. VI. pp. 186, 187.]

43. But now I pass to a more important point. If the scientific men are guilty in wasting their own time, how much more in wasting ours,

[1] [Quoted in the course of the passage (see above, § 33) now printed in *Deucalion*.
[2] [See, for instance, *Lectures on Art*, § 108 (Vol. XX. p. 102.]

the busy in other ways, who can only gather up the crumbs that fall from their doubtfully rapped and aerially mobile tables. I don't nibble much myself at those feebly nourishing doles, but I hear, and have heard from time to time for these last thirty years, of a mighty hubbub about spots in the sun. I don't see any spots in the sun, and I don't want to; neither did Turner, and he knew as much about the sun as may serve most of us. However, I take it on scientific report that spots there are, and you have been peering at them and talking about them these thirty years, you scientific people, and telling anybody who would listen to you that they were holes in the sun's atmosphere. I saw only the other day that you had just found out, or think you have found out, that they are nothing of the sort. I never cared what you said they were then, and I don't care what you say they are now; but I observe that after your thirty years of vain chatter, you have got at last at the germ of one useful observation, which needed no chatter, but only work, namely, the periodicity of these spots and their connection with drought, and therefore with famine.[1]

And I have no doubt the only use that will be made of that scientific information by the practical world will be according to the principles of modern political economy; namely, that no government shall ever lay up corn like Joseph before the famine comes, though you prophesy without dreams—so wise you are now—because to lay up corn providentially would be to interfere with trade. But your rich men will buy up all the corn every tenth year for themselves, sell it at famine prices in the eleventh, and if any be left, burn it for fuel in Yankee locomotives.[2]

44. So much of profit, of loss, and of moral benefit I admit you may get out of your spots on the sun. In the meantime, since it is only last year that you profess to have learned anything about them trustworthy, you will pardon me for my conviction that if your thirty years' investigations had been employed instead on the spots of a partridge feather, your work might have been quite as entertaining to yourselves, much less expensive to the country, and much more useful to these lazily sporting lads here, who are being taught to kill game in battues, and to think a garden party dull, unless there be promise held forth in a corner of the card of pigeon shooting.

I say these lazily sporting lads, too sorrowfully, in spite of all the fuss and foaming at the mouth along the river. All that fury is the fury of ambition, not the exultation of play; and to the same ignoble cause is owing the destruction of the loveliest scenes in the Alps no less than of the peace of Isis. How far your vanities have destroyed them for others I will not attempt to tell you to-day, but only how far they destroy them for yourselves.

45. Note this first, and solemnly. Ambition is continually in these days spoken of as of two kinds, laudable and unlaudable. But I tell you, with all force of soul that is in me, there is no laudable ambition. There

[1] [The speculations of Stanley Jevons on this subject were at the time beginning to be published: see the collection of his detached papers, entitled *Investigations in Currency and Finance*, pp. 194 *seq.*]

[2] [A prophecy partly fulfilled in some "corners" in wheat attempted in America.]

is no manner nor degree of ambition that is not both folly and crime. The love of praise is noble . . .

[Here the MS. breaks off. Ruskin read perhaps some passages from the concluding chapters of *Modern Painters*, ch. xi. §§ 19 *seq.* and ch. xii. § 20 (Vol. VII. pp. 426, 459).]

## LECTURE VI[1]

46. Some years ago I remember reading with contempt—which I was forced to conceal, because everybody called me a monster for experiencing it—of the grief felt by an Eastern traveller struck by fatal illness, not that he was leaving this pleasant world, but that he should never finish his book.[2]

I never cared enough for any of my books, or drawings either, to finish them at all, and should certainly never have finished *Modern Painters* if my father had not made me.[3] But I do think the book I should now like to begin, after about ten years' preparatory study, and to take about a quarter of a century to write, would have been really a good one, though not big, and its loss to the world in general I feel to be one of which the world in general will never appreciate the gravity.

Since, however, I can't—though it is very odd to me that I can't do what I should like to do in the matter, and what would be really so desirable for posterity—I am now going to do what is permitted me in gathering together what I have done, such as it is, from the places where I had thrown it down disgusted, and fitting and riveting it into such whole shape as I can, and repainting it a bit; and my mind is that, like Robinson Crusoe's pottery, though it's none of the daintiest, yet it will hold water.

47. Now, therefore, here is a very shabby bit of work of mine—this museum, namely—for the existence of which in such form, or at least in such manner, I am virtually answerable and will answer, so far as either my old friend and scholar, Mr. Woodward, or I myself, had our way with it, or were permitted by fate to follow our way through.

I little thought at this hour to see it still unfinished, but how fate stayed the hand of one of us you know,[4] and how she chilled the heart of the other I pray you once for all to hear to-day, as I told it when I never thought to concern myself with art in England more.

[Here Ruskin read from the lecture delivered in the Royal College of Science, Dublin, 1868, now printed in *Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 101 *seq.* (Vol. XVIII. pp. 148 *seq.*).]

48. I spoke then, and had only a right to speak then, of my personal discouragement, not of what I knew in this building to be unworthy, both

[1] [Delivered on November 17.]

[2] [H. T. Buckle, author of the *History of Civilization* (see above, p. 500), who died at Damascus. The incident is referred to in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 86.]

[3] [See above, § 13, p. 511.]

[4] [Woodward, the architect, died before the building was finished: see Vol. XVI. p. xlv.]

of its designers, and much more of Oxford, unworthy in that it was a first experiment in a new and most difficult application of our art, and under restrictions which were as inevitable as they were fatal, and of which it would have been as dishonourable to complain, as with them it was impossible to contend.

Neither in this lecture of '68 nor in what I wrote together with Dr. Acland[1] do I ever intimate that our failure, so far as it is a failure, was owing to any adversity other than the general conditions of the time. And so long as there was any memory in Oxford of the adversity which Dr. Acland and I had to face, both of us—he in order to get natural science respected in the schools, and I to get natural beauty regarded in the walls of them—so long as that struggle was remembered in any of its true circumstances, there was not only no cause for me to speak, but it would have been indecorous and undutiful in me, in the highest degree, to speak of any special discomfiture that I had suffered, or that my cause had suffered, in the allied contest.

49. But I have no such scruple now. The difficulties of those early days are known to few of you, and forgotten for the most part by those who know Dr. Acland, though you, sitting here by his help,[2] little think how much you owe to him of whatever you are able now within these walls to see or to hear. Dr. Acland has wholly won his side of the war, and after having had his first preparation of a lion, a tiger, or unicorn, I forget which, carried bodily, or bonily, by force out of his little Christ Church Museum, and upset out of its maceratory tub into St. Aldate's gutter, whence he long-sufferingly with his assistant picked up and cleaned the diluvian remnants as he could,[3] things are so changed for him, he is now triumphantly able to arch his museum aisles with vaults of vertebræ, and glorify its Gothic shrines with craniological mosaic. But on all my side of the field the ground is still to win. And so I must take leave, first, for my cause, and secondly, for my lost friend Woodward, and finally, for myself, that you may have the confidence in me as a teacher, without which I can be of no use to you to say how this museum failed, and failed signally, of being what I hoped.

50. In the first place for my cause. Definitely my architectural teaching had fallen into three clauses:—

(i.) That the method and materials of our building should be true and truly confessed.

(ii.) That its ornaments should be founded on natural form.

And (iii.) That the workman should be left free to design it as he went on.

Those three things I said and say. But in declaring that material should be honestly shown, I never meant that a handsome building could be built of common brickbats, if only you showed the bricks inside as well as out.

[1] [See the Letters on *The Oxford Museum*, Vol. XVI. pp. 211 *seq.*]

[2] [The reference is either to Acland's share in the foundation of the Museum, or to his good offices in securing the use of the theatre in it for Ruskin's lectures.]

[3] [An entertaining account of this raid upon Acland's museum by one of the Canons, who complained that the olfactory nerves of his coachman were offended by the proximity of the specimens, may be read in J. B. Atlay's *Memoir of Acland*, pp. 145–146. Dr. Pusey came to the rescue and offered the use of his stables to Acland.]

And in saying that ornament should be founded on natural form, I no more meant that a mason could carve a capital by merely looking at a leaf, than that a painter could paint a Madonna by merely looking at a young lady. And when I said that the workman should be left free to design his work as he went on, I never meant that you could secure a great national monument of art by letting loose the first lively Irishman you could get hold of to do what he liked in it.[1]

51. What I did mean, and do mean, I have brought to-day to show you. Here[2] is the architecture I have most fondly loved, and most eagerly praised. It is made of sound materials, but the materials are exquisitest marble and precious porphyry and gold. Its ornament is founded on the study of natural form, but on the study of natural forms disciplined into the strictest formalities of service and daintiest intricacies of design. And it is carved by workmen left free to their work, but only by those who had inherited the blood and observed the traditions of the noblest art-race of mankind through the two thousand years of uninterrupted and hereditary toil.

52. But, before going on to that, let me do full justice to the poor Irish workman whom I have just named, and to Mr. Woodward in employment of him. He was a man of the truest genius, and of the kindest nature. Not only the best, but the only person, who could have done anything of what we wanted to do here. But he could only have done anything of it, after many years of earnest learning; and he too easily thought, in the pleasure of his first essays, that he had nothing to learn. The delight of the freedom and power which would have been the elements of all health to a trained workman were destruction to him, and the more that if he would have studied, there was nobody to teach him, and there were hundreds to despise. I could not teach him—nothing but the master's constant presence would do that—and I dared not discourage him. I hoped he would find his way in time, but hoped, as so often, in vain.

53. With all affection and gratitude to him it is yet my duty to you, and much more to the cause of good art, to show you in what way he specially failed. To show you, if it may be, not to tell you. But of this, not to-day, for my first business must be to show you what I tried to do, not how I missed of it.

[The following passages of the lecture were left to extempore delivery. Ruskin showed various drawings of Venetian architecture, Byzantine and Gothic; and described how he would have made everything, inside and out, beautiful and harmonious. The memoranda goes on: "Venice. Byzantine and Gothic. Then Professor Westwood's Birds[3] and my stones."]

54. The life of *living* creatures, and the crystallization of *living* stones. Everything should be here that nice boys and girls should like to see, and everything they like to see goes with Gothic and Byzantine architecture. Nice girls, I said,[4] get an exquisite pleasure out of dress, and they should

[1] [For an account of O'Shea's doings at the Museum, see Vol. XVI. p. xlix.]
[2] [At this point Ruskin must have shown drawings or photographs of St. Mark's, Venice.]
[3] [Professor of Zoology: see Vol. XIV. p. 424 *n.*]
[4] [See above, § 26, p. 517.]

see the things they dress with, the furs and the feathers, and the cashmere beast, whatever he is, and the pretty seal; and they should see, for patterns to them, as mothers of families, every home and nest of the sea-bird and the rock, not despising homely duck and duckling; and nice boys the action of all wild creatures like themselves, and ways of them.

And both should see, beneath the beautiful building, its jewels and gold and its marble, all that it is made of, and know everything they can of the earth they tread, and its noble states and uses.

55. Well, lastly, you will ask, What would have been the expense of all this?

Well, about half the expense of a single ironclad.

And why you choose to build the ironclad, and scores of ironclads instead, and what beauty you suppose them to possess, and what gospel you suppose them to convey to mankind, it is for you to say, not me. But I can say, and that positively, of what use they actually are—namely, to find amusement for your youths with the only toys which, after their play on the river here, and study in the museum here, they care for; toys whose function is the reduction of their otherwise uninteresting fellow-creatures to the state in which you may here exhibit them for a scientific spectacle.

## LECTURE VII[1]

56. I must return to-day to the second of the three articles which in my first lecture I told you that *Modern Painters* was written to defend[2]—"That the food of Art is ocular and passionate study of nature."

And I must now farther develop this into telling you that there are two systems of nature to be seen. The first material, which we usually call simply natural—this world, with its rocks and sky and living creatures, men and women and the rest.

And the second order is the spiritual nature, which we vulgarly call supernatural, but which it is useless to call so, as it would be to call organic matter supermineral; as the organic matter is only another state and order of mineral matter, so what we vulgarly call supernatural is only another state and order of the natural.

57. Now this higher order of beings, supposing it to exist, being of course different from us, no less than above us, we can only see it as flies or serpents or birds see men; they not understanding much about us, and never seeing us wholly or rightly, but seeing what the facets of their eyes permit them to see, and conceiving as their several minds enable them to conceive.

A wasp, for instance, who has five eyes, of which three are in his forehead and two are projecting bosses on each side of his head, furnished each with many hundreds of separate facets, of which each is an eye in itself, being a bi-convex lens, under which is a crystalline cone,

[1] [Delivered on November 20.]
[2] [See above, § 1, p. 511.]

separated by a layer of dark colouring matter from the adjacent cones—a wasp, I say, with this elaborately scientific machinery of sight, must form a very curious conception of what the many hundreds of men, of which every single man must appear to him to consist, really signify, and what their temper and intellectual dispositions may be.

58. And although he make ever so much effort to find out the facts concerning this vision of his, whatever he thinks about it will always be in a measure false, but wrong or right in the degree in which he is like, or unlike, what he looks at. A rattlesnake forms, inevitably, one conception of you, a squirrel another, and a dog another. Now, your own minds in discerning spiritual natures are capable of growth, but at any given moment it is evident that if it exist yet you can discern of it only a certain quantity, and that wrongly or rightly in proportion to your own nature.

59. And farther, whatever statements we have received from persons professing experience in such matters, agree in assurance that without effort and patience, as of a person waiting till his eyes can bear light or fierce darkness, and only perhaps then—as in Plato's lovely metaphor of the cave,[1] the shadows of the things and not themselves—can we see any of these things at all. I press no point of these analogies upon you as enforcing any conclusion, only as showing you the entire reasonableness of expecting such and such conclusions.

60. What next I have to tell you is neither analogy nor conjecture, but fact.

We know of course that the bodily sight, though a spiritual faculty, is employed only on material things, and requires the substance of light to act by. It is defined accurately, and, I believe, defined in English for the first time in my lecture on the Science of Light.

[Here Ruskin read *Eagle's Nest*, §§ 106 *seq.* (above, pp. 199 *seq.*).]

61. That, then, is the definition of bodily sight employed on material things. But the spiritual sight employed on immaterial things is independent of light. Zechariah's words are always true of it—"I saw by night," for "the darkness and the light to Thee are both alike."[2] Darkness to the spirit means only seeing nothing for its own fault. Have you ever felt the dimness of the bodily eye in extreme sickness?—so also the spiritual eyes in sickness or weakness of heart.

Well, then, this faculty of seeing Him or the higher creatures, which to mortal eyes are invisible, we properly call "imagination," it being never, as I said,[3] of a thing that absolutely is, but of so much as can be shown us, under such form as it appoints, of Athena under the form of a feathered swallow,[4] of the Archangel Michael under the form of an armed man, and so on.

62. Now, all that I told of this faculty in the second volume of *Modern Painters* is wholly true, but it is expressly limited. Limited to what

[1] [See Vol. XX. p. 153 *n.*]
[2] [Zechariah i. 8, and Psalms cxxxix. 12.]
[3] [See above, p. 502.]
[4] [*Odyssey*, xxii. 240; compare *Love's Meinie*, § 79.]

then I knew; that is to say, its action in arranging pictures of things remembered, under the guidance of a mystic power. It is limited in these terms:—

[Here Ruskin presumably read from ch. ii. sec. ii. of *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. pp. 229 *seq.*).]

I am going to tell you to-day of what I now know—the appearance of things to the soul of a man trained in Christian faith, and submission to the influence of it. I am going to give you account of—not the pictures in the common sense, but the visions of Victor Carpaccio, painted by him instead of written. I must begin at once, for I find I shall only get half through my work to-day; and after you have heard what sort of things he saw, I will try to convince you, in next lecture, how he saw them.

[The rest of the lecture was delivered extempore, consisting of a further description of Carpaccio's pictures.]

## LECTURE VIII[1]

[This lecture consisted largely of readings from the chapters in the second volume of *Modern Painters* dealing with the Imaginative Faculty. Ruskin notes in the MS. that the following section only was new.]

63. What I was going to tell you of the highest work is summed under two statements.

That the imagination of it is always as involuntary and as vivid as a dream by day or night does not matter; the thing comes as a vision, and is either left before the mind and simply copied at the time, or remembered as a real scene and painted at leisure. That is the mode of really great or true imagination.

And the second thing I had to tell you was that the handiwork of a great painter is as instinctively certain as the paw or beak-work of an animal, only—I have told you that hundreds of times[2]—I only repeat it to-day because one of the consequences of it is that the great men feel themselves a kind of animal, as if they were less instead of greater than other people, and that they have a most curious sympathy with, and understanding of, animals, immeasurably beyond anything that mere animal painters can do, because in their own humility they understand the animal's pathetic subjection of its nature to a higher nature, and in their humanity they love best and see clearest what is human in the animal nature itself.

## LECTURES IX–XI

[For these lectures there are no notes preserved among Ruskin's MSS.]

[1] [Delivered on November 22.]

[2] [See, for instance, on the point of the instinctiveness of a great artist's work Vol. V. pp. 119, 143; and on the point of precision, Vol. XX. p. 78.]

## LECTURE XII[1]

### AN OXFORD LECTURE*

64. I am sure that all in this audience who were present yesterday at Dr. Acland's earnest and impressive lecture must have felt how deeply I should be moved by his closing reference to the friendship begun in our undergraduate days;—of which I will but say that, if it alone were all I owed to Oxford, the most gracious kindness of the Alma Mater would in that gift have been fulfilled to me.[2]

But his affectionate words, in their very modesty, as if even standing on the defence of his profession, the noblest of human occupations! and of his science—the most wonderful and awful of human intelligences! showed me that I had yet not wholly made clear to you the exactly limited measure in which I have ventured to dispute the fitness of method of study now assigned to you in this University.

65. Of the dignity of physical science, and of the happiness of those who are devoted to it for the healing and the help of mankind, I never have meant to utter, and I do not think I *have* uttered, one irreverent word. But against the curiosity of science, leading us to call virtually nothing gained but what is new discovery, and to despise every use of our knowledge in its acquisition; of the insolence of science, in claiming for itself a separate function of that human mind which in its perfection is one and indivisible, in the image of its Creator; and of the perversion of science, in hoping to discover by the analysis of death, what can only be discovered by the worship of life,—of these I have spoken,[3] not only with sorrow, but with a fear which every day I perceive to be more surely grounded, that such labour, in effacing from within you the sense of the presence of God in the garden of the earth, may awaken within you the prevailing echo of the first voice of its Destroyer, "*Ye* shall be as gods."[4]

66. To-day I have little enough time to conclude,—none to review—what I have endeavoured thus to say; but one instance, given me directly in conversation after lecture, by one of yourselves, will enable me to explain to you precisely what I *mean*.

* Left, at the Editor's request, with only some absolutely needful clearing of unintelligible sentences, as it was written for free delivery. It was the last of a course of twelve given this autumn;—refers partly to things already said, partly to drawings on the walls; and needs the reader's pardon throughout, for faults and abruptness incurable but by re-writing the whole as an essay instead of a lecture.—(*Nineteenth Century*, January 1878.)

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[1] [Delivered on December 1. Here reprinted from the *Nineteenth Century:* see Bibliographical Note, above, p. 492.]

[2] [See *Præterita*, i. § 224.]

[3] [See, for instance, *Eagle's Nest*, § 240 (above, p. 286: "the base curiosity of seeking for the origin of life in the dust").]

[4] [Genesis iii. 5.]

After last lecture, in which you remember I challenged our physiologists to tell me how a bird flies,[1] one of you, whose pardon, if he thinks it needful, I ask for this use of his most timely and illustrative statement, came to me, saying, "You know the way in which we are shown how a bird flies, is, that any one, a dove for instance, is given to us, plucked, and partly skinned, and incised at the insertion of the wing bone; and then, with a steel point, the ligament of the muscle at the shoulder is pulled up, and out, and made distinct from other ligaments, and we are told 'that is the way a bird flies,' and on that matter it is thought we have been told enough."

I say that this instance given me was timely; I will say more—in the choice of this particular bird, providential. Let me take, in their order, the two subjects of inquiry and instruction, which are indeed offered to us in the aspect and form of that one living creature.

67. Of the splendour of your own true life, you are told, in the words which, to-day, let me call, as your Fathers did, words of inspiration—"Yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove, that is covered with silver wings and her feathers with gold."[2] Of the manifold iris of colour in the dove's plumage, watched carefully in sunshine as the bird moves, I cannot hope to give you any conception by words; but that it is the most exquisite, in the modesty of its light, and in the myriad mingling of its hue, of all plumage, I may partly prove to you in this one fact, that out of all studies of colour, the one which I would desire most to place within your reach in these schools, is Turner's drawing of a dove, done when he was in happy youth at Farnley.[3] But of the causes of this colour, and of the peculiar subtlety in its iridescence, nothing is told you in any scientific book I have ever seen on ornithology.

68. Of the power of flight in these wings, and the tender purpose of their flight, you hear also in your Fathers' book. To the Church, flying from her enemies into desolate wilderness, there were indeed given two wings as of a great eagle.[4] But the weary saint of God, looking forward to his home in calm of eternal peace, prays rather—"Oh that I had wings like a dove, for then should I flee away, and be at rest."[5] And of these wings, and this mind of hers, this is what reverent science should teach you: first, with what parting of plume, and what soft pressure and rhythmic bearing of divided air, she reaches that miraculous swiftness of undubious motion, compared with which the tempest is slow, and the arrow uncertain; and secondly, what clue there is, visible, or conceivable to thought of man, by which, to her living conscience and errorless pointing of magnetic soul, her distant home is felt afar beyond the horizon, and the straight path, through concealing clouds, and over trackless lands, made plain to her desire, and her duty, by the finger of God.

69. And lastly, since in the tradition of the Old Covenant she was made the messenger of forgiveness to those eight souls saved through the

[1] [Compare *Love's Meinie*, §§ 65 *seq.*]
[2] [See Psalms lxviii. 13.]
[3] [Compare Vol. XIII. pp. 274, 370, and Vol. XIV. p. 444 *n.*]
[4] [Revelations xii. 14.]
[5] [Psalms lv. 6; see above, p. 497.]

baptism unto death,[1] and in the Gospel of the New Covenant, under her image, was manifested the well-pleasing of God, in the fulfilment of all righteousness by His Son in the Baptism unto life,[2]—surely alike all Christian people, old and young, should be taught to be gladdened by her sweet presence; and in every city and village in Christendom she should have such home as in Venice she has had for ages, and be, among the sculptured marbles of the temple, the sweetest sculpture; and, fluttering at your children's feet, their never-angered friend. And surely also, therefore, of the thousand evidences which any carefully thoughtful person may see, not only of the ministration of good, but of the deceiving and deadly power of the evil angels, there is no one more distinct in its gratuitous, and unreconcilable sin, than that this—of all the living creatures between earth and sky—should be the one chosen to amuse the apathy of our murderous idleness, with skill-less, effortless, merciless slaughter.

70. I pass to the direct subject on which I have to speak finally to-day;—the reality of that ministration of the good angels, and of that real adversity of the principalities and powers of Satan,[3] in which, without exception, all earnest Christians have believed, and the appearance of which, to the imagination of the greatest and holiest of them, has been the root, without exception, of all the greatest art produced by the human mind or hand in this world.

That you have at present no art properly so called in England at all—whether of painting, sculpture, or architecture *—I, for one, do not care. In midst of Scottish Lothians, in the days of Scott, there was, by how much less art, by so much purer life, than in the midst of Italy in the days of Raphael. But that you should have lost, not only the skill of Art, but the simplicity of Faith and life, all in one, and not only here deface your ancient streets by the Ford of the waters of sacred learning,[4] but also deface your ancient hills with guilt of mercenary desolation, driving their ancient shepherd life into exile, and diverting the waves of their streamlets into the cities which are the very centres of pollution, of avarice, and impiety: for this I *do* care,—for this you have blamed me for caring, instead of merely trying to teach you drawing. I have nevertheless yet done my best to show you what real drawing is; and must yet again bear your blame for trying to show you, through that, somewhat more.

71. I was asked, as we came out of chapel this morning, by one of the Fellows of my college, to say a word to the Undergraduates, about Thirlmere.[5] His request, being that of a faithful friend, came to enforce on me the connection between this form of spoliation of our native land of its running waters, and the gaining disbelief in the power of prayer over the distribution of the elements of our bread and water, in rain, and sunshine,—

* Of course, this statement is merely a generalization of many made in the preceding lectures, the tenor of which any readers acquainted with my recent writings may easily conceive.

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[1] [Genesis viii. 8.]
[2] [Matthew iii. 16.]
[3] [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 51 (Vol. XVII. p. 361).]
[4] [See above, pp. 192, 205.]
[5] [See Vol. XIII. p. 517 *n.*]

seed-time, and harvest.[1] Respecting which, I must ask you to think with me to-day what is the meaning of the myth, if you call it so, of the great prophet of the Old Testament,[2] who is to be again sent before the coming of the day of the Lord. For truly, you will find that if any part of your ancient faith be true, it is needful for every soul which is to take up its cross, with Christ, to be also first transfigured in the light of Christ,—talking with Moses and with Elias.[3]

The contest of Moses is with the temporal servitude,—of Elijah, with the spiritual servitude, of the people; and the war of Elijah is with their servitude essentially to two Gods, Baal, or the Sun God, in whose hand they thought was their life, and Baalzebub—the Fly God,[4]—of Corruption, in whose hand they thought was the arbitration of death.

The entire contest is summed in the first assertion by Elijah, of his authority as the Servant of God, over those elemental powers by which the heart of Man, whether Jew or heathen, was filled with food and gladness.[5]

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word."[6]

72. Your modern philosophers have explained to you the absurdity of all that: you think? Of all the shallow follies of this age, that proclamation of the vanity of prayer for the sunshine and rain; and the cowardly equivocations, to meet it, of clergy who never in their lives really prayed for anything, I think, excel. Do these modern scientific gentlemen fancy that nobody, before they were born, knew the laws of cloud and storm, or that the mighty human souls of former ages, who every one of them lived and died by prayer, and in it, did not know that in every petition framed on their lips they were asking for what was not only fore-ordained, but just as probably fore *done*?[7] or that the mother pausing to pray before she opens the letter from Alma or Balaclava, does not know that already he is saved for whom she prays, or already lies festering in his shroud? The whole confidence and glory of prayer is in its appeal to a Father who knows our necessities before we ask,[8] who knows our thoughts before they rise in our hearts, and whose decrees, as unalterable in the eternal future as in the eternal past, yet in the close verity of visible fact, bend, like reeds, before the fore-ordained and faithful prayers of His children.

73. Of Elijah's contest on Carmel[9] with that Sun-power in which, literally, you again now are seeking your life, you know the story, however little you believe it. But of his contest with the Death-power, on the hill of Samaria, you read less frequently, and more doubtfully.

"Oh, thou Man of God, the King hath said, Come down. And Elijah

[1] [Genesis viii. 22.]
[2] [Elijah; see Malachi iv. 5.]
[3] [Matthew x. 38, xvii. 2.]
[4] [Compare Vol. IV. p. 191 *n.*, and *Love's Meinie*, § 42.]
[5] [Acts xiv. 17.]
[6] [1 Kings xvii. 1.]
[7] [Compare the note at Vol. V. p. 213.]
[8] [From the fifth of the Offertory Collects.]
[9] [1 Kings xviii.]

answered and said, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from Heaven, and consume thee, and thy fifty."[1]

How monstrous, how revolting, cries your modern religionist, that a prophet of the Lord should invoke death on fifty men. And he sits himself, enjoying his muffin and *Times*, and contentedly allows the slaughter of fifty thousand men, so it be in the interests of England, and of his own stock on Exchange.[2]

But note Elijah's message. "Because thou hast sent to inquire of Baalzebub the God of Ekron, therefore, thou shalt not go down from the bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die."[3]

"Because thou hast sent to inquire:" he had not sent to *pray* to the God of Ekron, only to *ask* of him. The priests of Baal *prayed* to Baal, but Ahaziah only *questions* the fly-god.

He does not pray "Let me recover," but he asks "*Shall* I recover of this disease?"[4]

The scientific mind again, you perceive,—Sanitary investigation; by oracle of the God of Death. Whatever can be produced of disease, by flies, by aphides, by lice, by communication of corruption, shall not we moderns also wisely inquire, and so recover of our diseases?

All which may, for aught I know, be well; and when I hear of the vine disease or potato disease being stayed, I will hope also that plague may be, or diphtheria, or aught else of human plague, by due sanitary measures.

74. In the meantime, I see that the common cleanliness of the earth and its water is despised, as if *it* were a plague; and after myself labouring for three years to purify and protect the source of the loveliest stream in the English midlands,[5] the Wandle, I am finally beaten, because the road commissioners insist on carrying the road washings into it, at its source. But that's nothing. Two years ago, I went, for the first time since early youth, to see Scott's country by the shores of Yarrow, Teviot, and Gala waters.[6] I will read you once again, though you will remember it, his description of one of those pools which you are about sanitarily to draw off into your engine-boilers, and then I will tell you what I saw myself in that sacred country.

> "Oft in my mind such thoughts awake,
> By lone Saint Mary's silent lake;
> Thou know'st it well,—nor fen, nor sedge,
> Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge;
> Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink
> At once upon the level brink;
> And just a trace of silver sand
> Marks where the water meets the land.

[1] [2 Kings i. 10.]

[2] [See the letter on "Turkish loans and Bulgarian atrocities" in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 74 (Notes and Correspondence).]

[3] [2 Kings i. 16.]

[4] [2 Kings i. 2.]

[5] [So in the *Nineteenth Century;* but the reference is to the Wandle at Carshalton: see above, p. xxiv., and compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 48, § 3.]

[6] [Ruskin's date seems here to be wrong, for he was at Gala Water in 1871: see above, p. xxiii.]

Far in the mirror, bright and blue,
Each hill's huge outline you may view;
Shaggy with heath, but lonely, bare,
Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake, is there,
Save where, of land, yon slender line
Bears thwart the lake the scatter'd pine.
. . . . .

And silence aids—though the steep hills
Send to the lake a thousand rills
In summer tide, so soft they weep,
The sound but lulls the ear asleep;
Your horse's hoof-tread sounds too rude,
So stilly is the solitude.

Nought living meets the eye or ear,
But well I ween the dead are near;
For though, in feudal strife, a foe
Hath lain Our Lady's chapel low,
Yet still beneath the hallow'd soil,
The peasant rests him from his toil,
And, dying, bids his bones be laid,
Where erst his simple fathers pray'd."[1]

75. What I saw myself, in that fair country, of which the sight remains with me, I will next tell you. I saw the Teviot oozing, not flowing, between its wooded banks, a mere sluggish injection, among the filthy stones, of poisonous pools of scum-covered ink; and in front of Jedburgh Abbey, where the foaming river used to dash round the sweet ruins as if the rod of Moses had freshly cleft the rock for it, bare and foul nakedness of its bed, the whole stream carried to work in the mills, the dry stones and crags of it festering unseemly in the evening sun, and the carcase of a sheep, brought down in the last flood, lying there in the midst of the children at their play, literal and ghastly symbol, in the sweetest pastoral country in the world, of the lost sheep of the house of Israel.[2]

That is your symbol to-day, of the Lamb as it had been slain; and that the work of your prayerless science;—the issues, these, of your enlightened teaching, and of all the toils and the deaths of the Covenanters on those barren hills, of the prophetic martyrs here in your crossing streets, and of the highest, sincerest, simplest patriot of Catholic England, Sir Thomas More, within the walls of England's central Tower. So is ended, with prayer for the bread of this life, also the hope of the life that is to come. Yet I will take leave to show you the light of that hope, as it shone on, and guided, the children of the ages of faith.

76. Of that legend of St. Ursula which I read to you so lately,[3] you remember, I doubt not, that the one great meaning is the victory of her faith over all fears of death. It is the laying down of all the joy, of all the hope, nay, of all the Love, of this life, in the eager apprehension of the rejoicing and the love of Eternity. What truth there was in such faith

[1] [*Marmion:* Introduction to Canto ii.]
[2] [Matthew x. 6.]
[3] [Compare above, p. 501. The legend is given in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 71.]

I dare not say that I know; but what manner of human souls it made, you may for yourselves *see*. Here are enough brought to you, of the thoughts of a believing people.* This maid in her purity is no fable; this is a Venetian maid, as she was seen in the earthly dawn, and breathed on by the breeze of her native sea. And here she is in her womanhood, in her courage and perfect peace, waiting for her death.

I have sent for this drawing for you, from Sheffield, where it is to stay, they needing it more than you.[1] It is the best of all that my friend did with me at Venice, for St. George, and with St. George's help and St. Ursula's. It shows you only a piece of the great picture of the martyrdom—nearly all have fallen around the maid, and she kneels with her two servant princesses, waiting for her own death. Faithful behind their mistress, they wait with her,—not feebler, but less raised in thought, as less conceiving their immortal destiny; the one, a gentle girl, conceiving not in her quiet heart any horror of death, bows her fair head towards the earth, almost with a smile; the other, fearful lest her faith should for an instant fail, bursts into passion of prayer through burning tears. St. Ursula kneels, as daily she knelt, before the altar, giving herself up to God for ever.

And so you see her, here in the days of childhood, and here in her sacred youth, and here in her perfect womanhood, and here borne to her grave.[2]

Such creatures as these *have* lived—do live yet, thank God, in the faith of Christ.

77. You hear it openly said that this, their faith, was a foolish dream. Do you choose to find out whether it was or not? You may if you will, but you can find it out in one way only.

Take the dilemma in perfect simplicity. Either Christianity is true or not. Let us suppose it first one, then the other, and see what follows.

Let it first be supposed untrue. Then rational investigation will in all probability discover that untruth; while, on the other hand, irrational submission to what we are told may lead us into any form of absurdity or insanity; and, as we read history, we shall find that this insanity has perverted, as in the Crusades, half the strength of Europe to its ruin, and been the source of manifold dissension and misery to society.

Start with the supposition that Christianity is untrue, much more with the desire that it should be, and that is the conclusion at which you will certainly arrive.

But, on the other hand, let us suppose that it is, or may be, true. Then, in order to find out whether it is or not, we must attend to what it says

* The references were to the series of drawings lately made, in Venice, for the Oxford and Sheffield schools, from the works of Carpaccio, by Mr. Fairfax Murray.[3]

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[1] ["The Moment before Martyrdom. Water-colour study of St. Ursula and two of her Maidens." Two studies of the subject, by C. F. Murray, are in the Ruskin Museum at Sheffield.]

[2] [A study of this last subject—"St. Ursula on her Bier"—by Ruskin himself, is No. 106 in the Rudimentary Series at Oxford (Vol. XXI. p. 200 *n.*).]

[3] [Compare Vol. XIII. p. 526, and Vol. XXI. p. 299 *n.*]

of itself. And its first saying is an order to adopt a certain line of conduct. *Do* that first, and you shall know more.[1] Its promise is of blessing and of teaching, more than tongue can utter, or mind conceive, if you choose to do this; and it refuses to teach or help you on any other terms than these.

78. You may think it strange that such a trial is required of you. Surely the evidences of our future state might have been granted on other terms—nay, a plain account might have been given, with all mystery explained away in the clearest language. *Then*, we should have believed at once.

Yes, but, as you see and hear, that, if it be our way, is not God's. He has chosen to grant knowledge of His truth to us on one condition and no other. If we refuse that condition, the rational evidence around us is all in proof of our death, and that proof is true, for God also tells us that in such refusal we shall die.[2]

You see, therefore, that in either case, be Christianity true or false, death is demonstrably certain to us in refusing it. As philosophers, we can expect only death, and as unbelievers, we are condemned to it.

There is but one chance of life—in admitting so far the possibility of the Christian verity as to try it on its own terms. There is not the slightest possibility of finding out whether it be true, or not, first.

"Show me a sign first and I will come," you say. No, answers God. "Come first, then you shall see a sign."[3]

Hard, you think? You will find it is not so, on thinking more. For this, which you are commanded, is not a thing unreasonable in itself. So far from that, it is merely the wisest thing you could do for your own and for others' happiness, if there were no eternal truth to be discovered.

You are called simply to be the servant of Christ, and of other men for His sake; that is to say, to hold your life and all its faculties as a means of service to your fellows. All you have to do is to be sure it *is* the service you are doing them, and not the service you do yourself, which is uppermost in your minds.

79. Now you continually hear appeals to you made in a vague way, which you don't know how far you can follow. You shall not say that, to-day; I both can and will tell you what Christianity requires of you in simplest terms.

Read your Bible as you would any other book—with strictest criticism, frankly determining what you think beautiful, and what you think false or foolish. But be sure that you try accurately to understand it, and transfer its teaching to modern need by putting other names for those which have become superseded by time. For instance, in such a passage as that which follows and supports the "Lie not one to another" of Colossians iii.—"seeing that ye have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the spirit of Him that created him, where" (meaning in that great creation where) "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free." In applying that verse to the conduct and speech of modern policy, it falls

[1] [See John vii. 17.]
[2] [See John viii. 24.]
[3] [See Matthew xii. 38, 39.]

nearly dead, because we suffer ourselves to remain under a vague impression—vague, but practically paralysing,—that though it was very necessary to speak the truth in the countries of Scythians and Jews, there is no objection to any quantity of lying in managing the affairs of Christendom. But now merely substitute modern for ancient names, and see what a difference it will make in the force and appeal of the passage, "Lie not one to another, brethren, seeing that ye have put off the old man, with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed to knowledge," *εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν*, according to the knowledge of Him that created him, in that great creation where there is neither Englishman nor German, baptism nor want of baptism, Turk nor Russian, slave nor free, but Christ is all, and in all.

80. Read your Bible, then, making it the first morning business of your life to understand some piece of it clearly, and your daily business to obey of it all that you understand, beginning first with the most human and most dear obedience—to your father and mother. Doing all things as they would have you do, for the present: if they want you to be lawyers—be lawyers; if soldiers—soldiers; if to get on in the world—even to get money—do as they wish, and that cheerfully, after distinctly explaining to them in what points you wish otherwise. Theirs is for the present the voice of God to you.

But, at the same time, be quite clear about your own purpose, and the carrying out of that so far as under the conditions of your life you can. And any of you who are happy enough to have wise parents will find them contented in seeing you do as I now tell you.

81. First cultivate all your personal powers, not competitively,[1] but patiently and usefully. You have no business to read in the long vacation. Come *here* to make scholars of yourselves, and go to the mountains or the sea to make men of yourselves. Give at least a month in each year to rough sailor's work and sea fishing. Don't lounge and flirt on the beach, but make yourselves good seamen. Then, on the mountains, go and help the shepherd at his work, the woodmen at theirs, and learn to know the hills by night and day. If you are staying in level country, learn to plough, and whatever else you can that is useful. Then here in Oxford, read to the utmost of your power, and practise singing, fencing, wrestling, and riding. No rifle practice, and no racing—boat or other. Leave the river quiet for the naturalist, the angler, and the weary student like me.

You may think all these matters of no consequence to your studies of art and divinity; and that I am merely crotchety and absurd. Well, that is the way the devil deceives you. It is not the sins which we *feel* sinful, by which he catches us; but the apparently healthy ones,—those which nevertheless waste the time, harden the heart, concentrate the passions on mean objects, and prevent the course of gentle and fruitful thought.

82. Having thus cultivated, in the time of your studentship, your powers truly to the utmost, then, in your manhood, be resolved they shall be spent in the true service of men—not in being ministered unto, but in ministering. Begin with the simplest of all ministries—breaking of bread to the poor. Think first of that, not of your own pride, learning, comfort, prospects in life: nay, not now, once come to manhood, may even the

[1] [On this subject, see above, pp. 148, 243.]

obedience to parents check your own conscience of what is your Master's work. "Whoso loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me."[1] Take the perfectly simple words of the Judgment, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me:" but you must *do* it, not preach it. And you must not be resolved that it shall be done only in a gentlemanly manner. Your pride must be laid down, as your avarice, and your fear. Whether as fishermen on the sea, ploughmen on the earth, labourers at the forge, or merchants at the shop-counter, you must break and distribute bread to the poor, set down in companies—for that also is literally told you—upon the green grass, not crushed in heaps under the pavement of cities. Take Christ at His literal word, and, so sure as His word is true, He will be known of you in breaking of bread. Refuse that servant's duty because it is plain,—seek either to serve God, or know Him, in any other way: your service will become mockery of Him, and your knowledge darkness. Every day your virtues will be used by the evil spirits to conceal, or to make respectable, national crime; every day your felicities will become baits for the iniquity of others; your heroisms, wreckers' beacons, betraying them to destruction; and before your own deceived eyes and wandering hearts every false meteor of knowledge will flash, and every perishing pleasure glow, to lure you into the gulf of your grave.

83. But obey the word in its simplicity, in wholeness of purpose and with serenity of sacrifice, like this of the Venetian maid's, and truly you shall receive sevenfold into your bosom in this present life, as in the world to come, life everlasting. All your knowledge will become to you clear and sure, all your footsteps safe; in the present brightness of domestic life you will foretaste the joy of Paradise, and to your children's children bequeath, not only noble fame, but endless virtue. "He shall give his angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways;" "and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."[2]

[1] [The references in § 82 are to Matthew x. 37, xxv. 40; Mark vi. 39; Luke xxiv. 35.]

[2] [Luke xviii. 30; Psalms xci. 11; Philippians iv. 7.]

END OF VOLUME XXII

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